LETTERS,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

CONCERT of PRINCES,

AND THE

DISMEMBERMENT

OF

POLAND and FRANCE.

(First published in the MORNING CHRONICLE between July 20, 1792, and June 25, 1793.)

WITH

CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.

BY A CALM OBSERVER.

Facilis Descensus Averni.

VIRG.

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LETTERS,

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

CONDUCT of PRINCES,

IN THE

PARLIAMENT

OF

POLAND and FRANCE.

BRITISH MUSEUM

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THE following pages contain all which I have written reſpecting the Concert of Princes, and the Diſmemberment of Poland and of France. Two additional Letters, reſpecting the war with France, are inſerted in the Appendix; which, with my Preface and its Poſtſcript, together with two Letters and a ſet of remarks on the ſubject of the French revolution, (here omitted, as irrelative to the general object,) comprehend every thing which has appeared, in any ſhape, under the ſignature of the CALM OBSERVER.

Very few alterations have been made in theſe papers, except to do juſtice to my own ideas, for which purpoſe I have been obliged to recaſt various paſſages. It would ſcarcely ſeem decorous to the public, to confeſs how little time (ſnatched commonly at diſtant intervals) I have been able to dedicate to my ſubject; but, it is a debt to myſelf, to ſtate, that, preſſed by its importance, I have in every particular ſacrificed preciſion to ſpeed, truſting to the opportunity of the republication of what I had written, for the means of reviſing it. — Whether events will be ſuch, as ſhall correſpond with my conjectures, is a queſtion infinitely important to the public, but little ſo to my own reputation; for, where *ſome* deciſion or other is requiſite, it is enough to have propoſed the opinion which was moſt adviſeable at the *moment*; it being often wiſe to guard againſt that which is only probable, or even poſſible. "After all, (ſays Sir Wm Temple,) nothing is ſo

"hard,

" hard, as to give *wiſe counſel* before events; and nothing " ſo eaſy, as after them to make *wiſe reflections:* many " things ſeem true in reaſon and prove falſe in experience; " many that are weakly conſulted are executed with ſuc- " ceſs." If I have reſorted, therefore, to conjectures, it has by means ariſen from a wanton ſpirit of *wagering againſt events*, in order to prove myſelf gifted with foreſight; for none are leſs inclined to hazard their opinions upon matters at iſſue, than thoſe who are obliged deliberately to record them; but, as it is clearly the part of prudence to exerciſe *forethought*, I have uſed the liberty of an Engliſhman in queſtioning the ſolidity of that forethought, which has been employed by our miniſtry. If I have at any time gone beyond conjecture, I have erred againſt my own rules; but my caution at times inſenſibly deſerted me, as I conceived my general object impregnable, from having a ſucceſſion of conſiderations behind which it ſtood intrenched, all of which muſt in turn fail, before I could prove ultimately miſtaken.

It is here proper to remind the reader, that it is neceſſary, in peruſing each letter, to refer to its date, as a farther excuſe for the fallibility and nature of its contents.

As my writings have been void throughout of all concert, and as my facts have been derived ſolely from my own ſources of information, allowances are due, and will be made, for a multitude of imperfections.

ERRATA,

ERRATA, &c.

Of which the more important are marked with an Asterisk.

ERRATA, &c.

Of which the more important are marked with an Aſteriſk.

Page.	Line.	
xxvi.		at the end of the ſecond paragraph, *add*, even if it did not exclude many of thoſe who can judge for themſelves.
xxxi.	19.	*for* quiet, *read* tranquillity.
* 2.	4.	*after* Auſtria, *inſert* above.
4.	14.	*for* treaty, *read* concert.
20.	5.	*after* and, *inſert* having.
50.	28.	*for* forgot, *read* forgotten.
33.	19 & 20.	*read*, years. She proſpers, in defiance of public and private deſpotiſm; ſhe
* 42.	32.	*dele*, and adoption.
43.	17.	*before* are, *inſert* they.
46.	2.	*read*, thought his horſe good enough to be.
47.	22.	*after* neceſſity, *inſert* or caprice.
* 47.	26.	*for* require, *read* acquire.
48.	7.	*for* applauded, *read* diſtinguiſhed.
50.	10.	*after* attendance, *inſert* children made into hoſtages.
55.	10.	*before* enjoyments, *inſert* plebeian.
* 58.	29.	*for* or to force, *read* and only lately favoured.
74.	16.	*for* and, *read* though.
88.	22 & 23.	*dele what is in the parentheſis.*
* 108.	28.	*for* againſt whom Pruſſia, *read* for whom Ruſſia.
* 108.	30.	*for* ſupporting, *read* oppoſing.
		for their, *read* her then.
113.	3.	*after* by, *inſert* driving us to.
* 120.	7.	*for* detachment, *read* detached.
* 122.	26.	*for* countenance, *read* continuance.
142.	24.	*read* ſhew.
148.	24.	*read* objections.
179.	23.	for *Geneva*, read *Genoa*.
228.	32.	*dele* the.
228.	33.	*for* ſafely, *read* lately.

APPENDIX.

11.	laſt line,	*for* will, *read* ſhall.
12.	13,	*after* letter, inſert an aſteriſk; and ſubjoin the following note; See p. 176 and 186.

THE PREFACE.

THE following Letters exhibit various incidents and remarks reſpecting the revolutions of France and Poland; but as they are chiefly of a practical nature, and ſay little of the *revolutionary doctrines*, which of late have occupied the public mind, this defect will be ſupplied by a *preface*, which thoſe will paſs by who are diſpleaſed with argumentative matter.

It is here then curious to obſerve, that the ſame perſons who affirm, that *foreigners* may interfere in the government of another country; aſſert, that the *natives* of that country are altogether deſtitute of ſuch a privilege reſpecting themſelves. The two opinions however are perfectly conſiſtent; for they both imply, that nations have no rights; and that princes, either foreign or native, muſt be free from check in all they meditate againſt them.

The *facts* which the following pages exhibit, on the ſubject of the *interference of foreigners* in matters of internal government, of themſelves diſplay a levity of motive, a profligacy of principle, a treachery of means, and an extremity of cruelty, which, in ſome degree,

prove the falſity of the principle by the nature of its conſequences.—But there is ſtill room for new *reaſoning* on the ſame ſubject, in addition to that contained in my letters.

We acknowledge then, in private life, that if any individual *ſpeaks* uninvited, in the concerns of another, it is impertinent; and ſtill more, if he *acts* in them; but epithets are wanting to deſcribe the character of him, who intermeddles in the concerns of another by force.—Every great collection of men however, upon its reſpective territory, whatever be its latitude, colour, and deſcription, is equally its own maſter, with an individual. Nations indeed, are as *units* to one another, even in a ſtill ſtronger ſenſe than individuals, becauſe in private concerns there is a general tribunal for diſtributive juſtice, in order to protect the injured; but as no ſuch appeal and protection exiſt with reſpect to injured nations, the rule in morals applies, that principles require to be ſedulouſly upheld in proportion to the riſque of their infraction and the magnitude of the intereſt at ſtake.—This is ſaid on the ſubject of *pure* interference by one nation in the government of another, as in the caſe of Poland; but even in a caſe of pure *external contention*, (which the war with France is falſely pretended to be,) the mutual appeal to *arms*, ſhows how little ſway at any time is left for *juſtice* between nation and nation; and conſequently how ſtrict ſhould be the abſtinence from all ſtruggle directed with a view to internal interference.—What has been ſaid will appear ſtill more clear, if we recollect, that the competence of a court of juſtice to try a given caſe, implies the poſſeſſion of the means of obtaining evidence reſpecting it, eſpecially by confronting the parties; and that without this is done in the caſes in queſtion, the interfering power acts with ſtill more injuſtice, than is

charged upon the convention when ſitting in judgment upon Louis XVI. Beſides, war, which is the agent which muſt in general be employed upon theſe occaſions, preſents a very *expenſive*, as well as an *uncertain* court of judicature; and it ſeems highly improper for any government to charge its ſubjects with the burthen of fighting to convert another nation; not to forget, how much it tends permanently to embitter two nations, when one of them in effect promotes a civil war in the other.—In ſhort, none ſhould govern, who do not partake in the conſequences of their own government; and for a ſtill ſtronger reaſon, none ſhould govern, who have different and even oppoſite intereſts reſpecting the governed; or who are ignorant of their local circumſtances, their mental and other habits.

If nations, however, are at any time to ſubmit to a controlling power from without, it can only be to that of other nations perfectly *ſelf-governed*, and who therefore may claim kindred feelings with them; though even theſe muſt confine themſelves to caſes of *natural juſtice*, and not over-rule in matters of mere *political option*.—But in no ſenſe are tyrants or arbitrary monarchs to interfere, who are only *parts*, and the worſt parts of a nation; whoſe anxiety is not to govern well, but merely to govern; who in foreign politics never conſult any thing, but their own intereſt; whom abſolute power has debaſed in their own perſons, and who by abſolute power reciprocally debaſe their people; and who by dreading to give efficacy to the wiſhes of their *own* nation, prove that they can have little attachment to the happineſs of any others.—What in general is an *arbitrary prince*, but one who begins life with a ſpoiled education; whoſe paſſions are afterwards left unreſiſted; from whom truth is anxiouſly con-

cealed; whoſe very faults are flattered; who thinks himſelf born to rule; who ſuppoſes that every enterprize againſt his neighbours is permiſſible, which is practicable; who deems wars only blameable, when they are unſucceſsful; and who thinks that he has done little to figure in hiſtory, unleſs he alters the boundaries of geography without, and increaſes the ſubmiſſiveneſs of his people within?—If this be the portrait applicable to the generality of arbitrary princes, I aſk, whether we ſee in it any encouragement to truſt them with the fate of more nations, than thoſe they controul already; and whether thoſe politicians deſerve well of mankind who ſeek to propagate the principle, that arbitrary princes can commonly decide better for foreign nations, than thoſe nations can decide for themſelves; and thus open the way for them to legiſlate for mankind *univerſally?* I allow, that nations may eaſily do wrong; but ſince arbitrary princes ſo ſeldom *ſeek* to do right, and ſo ſeldom perform well the right they ſeek to do, I muſt affirm, that no principle or rule ought to be laid down which is ſo likely to be fatal in every inſtance of its practice, as that in queſtion.

But even between nation and nation, *ſelf-intereſt* is no juſt ground for intermeddling in matters of internal government, againſt the wiſh of a majority.—What for example ſhould we ſay, in private life, to the man who ſhould prevent his neighbour, by force, from improving his eſtate, leſt he ſhould underſell him at market; or from educating his children well, leſt they ſhould become ſuperior to his own; or from employing good counſellors, leſt he ſhould be unſucceſsful in a law-ſuit againſt him? And what ſhould we ſay, if, in order to accompliſh theſe unjuſt and injurious purpoſes, he added to force both *devaſtation and murder?*—But if theſe horrid

horrid means are not to be employed to obtain *poſitive advantages*, neither are they to be reſorted to for averting ſmall or imaginary *inconveniences*. For example, if the French write libels upon the Britiſh government; or if, in a manner ſtill more ſpeaking than a libel, namely by practice, they ſhall hereafter ſhew their new government, whatever it may be, to be preferable to our own; this will furniſh no legitimate cauſe for obſtructing their attempts towards forming a government of their own choice. To ſilence the printing preſſes of France is uſeleſs, becauſe we have laws of our own, ſufficient to prevent the *circulation* of any thing improper which is printed; and if the example of a better government in France, ſhould ever become obnoxious, the only legitimate antidote will be to improve our own, our predilection to our ancient government, being ſufficient to prevent a raſh adoption of foreign novelties. But alas! a hazard ſo conſoling to a well-wiſher of mankind, ſeems not to be very imminent.—And as to any riſques offering to our external ſafety, commerce, or other national object, from France, as her government ſtands conſtituted at preſent; where is the man who fears them? or if he fears them, ought he not infinitely more to fear them, in caſe of France being reunited (through the medium of foreign interpoſition) to all and more than thoſe *foreign allies*, by which France has heretofore rendered herſelf formidable?

But may we not interfere caſually, and as it were *obiter*, it may be ſaid, in the government of France, in the courſe of our foreign warfare with her; and give her a government more ſuited to our own purpoſes and to her own happineſs, than that which ſhe at preſent poſſeſſes?—I anſwer, no. For firſt, it is a violation of principle; and principles are never more fatally

violated, than when the pretext for it is plauſible. A *little and a little*, is eaſily made into a *little more*; a collateral object, carried on under the cover of a principal one, is eaſily itſelf made a principal one; and no political violence is apt to go to greater exceſs than that, which is perpetrated under the name of benevolence, becauſe the merit of the motive is made an excuſe for the villany of the means.—But ſecondly, if Great-Britain takes up this pretence herſelf, ſhe authoriſes it in others; and Auſtria and Pruſſia may then abuſe the precedent in its wideſt latitude; and yet in exact proportion as Auſtria and Pruſſia have it in their *power* to commit abuſes, ſo, in the ſame proportion, ſhould we avoid furniſhing them with any warrant for it. What will not Auſtria ſay to *us*, who have been the habitual rivals of France, if we pretend to regulate the government of France, and play the part of an *amicus curiæ*; and forbid the like indulgence to Auſtria; to Auſtria, the ally of the monarchy of France, the power which is *principal in the war*, and which has a family-motive for reſtoring a prince born from one of its own relations; and if for reſtoring the prince, by a like reaſon intereſted to provide for his future ſecurity.—If we wiſh here to know what the idea of Auſtria is as to the meaſure of government now proper for France, and for maintaining the permanency of that meaſure, it may be ſeen from the Duke of Brunſwick's manifeſto; the object of which (as ſeparate from its menaces and as never yet contradicted, except for the artful and deteſtable purpoſes of the *moment*) is this—France muſt be governed by the will of *one* man, aided or not by counſellors, as he *alone* ſhall think proper; and every man who ſhall be found to have contravened this, ought to meet exemplary puniſhment.—To this language, Pruſſia has done more

than

than ſubſcribe; for ſhe has impriſoned in a cruel manner, La Fayette, for having dared to oppoſe arbitrary power in France, though he was the very man who prevented the inſtitution of a republic upon the king's abſconding in June 1791, when multitudes of the *ariſtocracy* would willingly have concurred in it; and ſhe has moreover herſelf exhibited the parallel to that ſpecies of government in Pruſſia, and in the purſuit of her double partition of Poland.—But if ſuch a reſtoration and ſuch a government ſhall actually take place in France, ſhall not we have have to fear a cloſe connection between the Auſtrian and Bourbon houſes, far more formidable than the late family-compact, and to which it is eaſy for Pruſſia and Ruſſia to become leagued? The confederates I know will willingly compliment Great-Britain with being the firſt in the field, but will ſhe not be made the laſt in the cabinet, the moment ſhe wiſhes for peace upon any terms hoſtile to ſuch a combination? —Conſequently both principle and policy recommend that we ſhould ſuffer France to remain independent under her own government, rather than allied to foreign powers under a preſcribed one; and that we ſhould not work our own ruin in the face of juſtice.

As to the pretence, that one portion of a nation may invite foreigners to act againſt the other portion of it; I anſwer, that *primâ facie*, the neceſſity of calling in ſuch aid, implies a weakneſs in thoſe who invoke the aid, which argues, that they are themſelves the *minority*.—Next, the fable of the horſe inviting the ſuccour of the man againſt the ſtag, ſhews the danger of ſuch an alliance, ultimately, to *both* parts of a nation. Or, if we wiſh to ſee the ſame fact illuſtrated, without the help of fable, let us obſerve the conduct of Auſtria and Pruſſia towards the French emigrants; whoſe ſufferings they

overlook, and whoſe co-operation they ſcorn; doubtleſs, becauſe, meaning to *plunder* France and to give it a government according to their *own* pleaſure, they do not chooſe to ſeem to be under any obligation to the emigrants.—And if, in reply to this, it be ſaid that the emigrants have behaved ill; does not this, if true, furniſh a new proof of the impropriety of foreign interference, even upon a partial invitation; ſince the inviters, beſides forming the minority of a nation, may alſo, by the very hypotheſis, be deſtitute of the claim of merit*?

Thus much I have thought neceſſary to be ſaid on the ſubject of *foreign potentates interpoſing in the internal government of other nations.*—I ſhall next examine how far nations have a right to *govern themſelves*, that is, to regulate their own conſtitutions.

In order to prove (for Mr. Burke has put us under the ſtrange neceſſity of proving it) that there is no criminality in the poſition, that a nation in caſe of neceſſity may riſe as well to *aſſert*, as to *defend* its rights, I ſhall again appeal to the circumſtances of private life, as the beſt means of reſtoring us to our natural ſentiments upon this ſubject, ſhould either ſophiſtry, habit, or paſſion, have perverted them.

If twenty-ſix men of different nations, then, are ſhipwrecked upon a deſert iſland, they agree upon their laws and elect their chiefs. Now what is to preclude the like conſent, if the number is twenty-ſix millions? —If *force* is employed, force may at any time undo its own work.

* The above paragraph was not inſerted in the preface as given in the Morning Chronicle.

But

But these twenty-six *millions* forming a nation, had *forefathers*, it is said, who established a government. Be it so; and they did right for *themselves*;—but can this constrain their successors? Did they take a bond from their children, as the condition of their birth, that they should have no other will but theirs? Did they not rather become fathers, in consequence of a great law of nature; and having thus left behind them their *own likeness*, may not these, with respect to government, do what their fathers did before them?—Look at other animals: they abandon their young when capable of their own care; mere parentage, with them, conveying no rights whatever. With men indeed, parental protection is more prolonged; but their offspring *repay* this favour, not only to their own parents in their second childhood of old age, but to their own issue.—If their young are farther protected by a civil government, this benefit is clearly owing from the adult to all to whom they give existence, though it is a duty fulfilled *in the way which best pleases them;* and which having been fulfilled to them by *their* ancestors, will be fulfilled to *themselves* again by their descendants, when their life declines.—Thus there is a *chain* of *justice*, descending from father to son, where good offices are continually received and repaid, but often with a difference of persons. But no new duty is created thereby as to *civil government*, except that each generation ought to act therein for the best, according to its *own* judgment.—Agriculture, navigation, war, physic, and other arts and sciences, have their systems changed at pleasure; and why not the art of government? We notoriously change our municipal law also; and what is a constitution, but municipal law in a larger sense; or in other words, that leading law, under

under which other laws are framed and executed?—The objection to altering a conſtitution, is not ſo much leſt it ſhould be done improperly, but leſt *quarrels* ſhould thence enſue, and leſt the *general obedience to civil government* ſhould be ſhaken. Thus France in changing its government, has given a general convulſion to Europe, merely becauſe multitudes have been intereſted in the continuance of its abuſes; for whenever governments are naturally conſtituted, ſuch undertakings are accompliſhed without inconvenience. Events of this ſort, for example, create ſo little ſenſation in North-America, as ſcarcely to be noticed out of their reſpective ſtates; though ſeveral of them have periodical reviſions of their conſtitutions appointed, their *conventions* ſitting at the very ſame inſtant with their *legiſlatures*.—The preſent queſtion however in France, is not whether the nation ſhall *diſſolve* an old government in order to form a new one; but, when an old government is *actually* diſſolved and its return impracticable, unleſs by force, how to proceed in replacing it.

But we have hitherto ſuppoſed, that an eſtabliſhed government has been *matter of choice* in ancient times; whereas it has been, in general, matter of force and neceſſity. Is poſterity then, in its endleſs generations, ſervilely to copy thoſe, who have ſervilely been made to ſet an example? Are they to adhere to the government, not of their forefathers, but of thoſe who *enſlaved* their foreſathers?—All men once were intitled to be free, becauſe all poſſeſſed equal rights from nature; ſo that innovations are *originally* to be attributed to tyrants: that is, they have come from thoſe, who have *perverted* civil government; and not from thoſe, who have been made to yield to this perverſion, to a degree ſufficient to enſlave their minds, equally with their bodies.

bodies.—This is not merely theoretical reaſoning, in the caſe of the French; for hiſtory tells us, that the French are a nation deſcended either from freemen or from ſlaves: conſequently the deſcendants of the free, have ſtill a claim to freedom, as an inheritance; and the enſlaved may avail themſelves of the ſame force to aſſert a right, which others have employed againſt their fathers and themſelves, to inflict a wrong.

But if old governments have no preponderating claim on account of their antiquity, or of the force which eſtabliſhed them, ſo neither have they in general, upon account of any *wiſdom* ſhewn in their conſtruction.—In moſt of the ſtates of Europe, their original governments were formed, when their legiſlators could neither *read* nor *write;* when the works alſo of the elder ancients, literally lay buried in duſt; when hiſtory, art and ſcience were alike unknown or unnoticed; and when conqueſts alſo were much in faſhion. In ſhort, theſe governments in general were fixed, when legiſlators poſſeſſed neither lights nor experience themſelves, nor derived any from others; when the few lorded it over the many, and force ſtood in lieu of right.—The reſult, as might have been expected, was that *injuſtice, ignorance, wars, and intolerance,* have been *univerſal;* and a lapſe of ten centuries witneſſed fewer improvements, than receive birth in ten years, in modern times, in conſequence of *deviating* from that very ſyſtem of antiquity, which it is propoſed that Europe in general ſhall retain.—Notwithſtanding the bigotted wiſh of the barons of England *(nolumus leges Angliæ mutari)*, ſcarcely a ſhred of *Magna Charta*, or even of the Bill of Rights, is at preſent looked to in practice: villenage is extinct, moſt of the feudal rights of the crown and of others are commuted, pecuniary compenſation for

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crimes ſubſiſts only in a trifling degree, and the eyes of the Britiſh nation have opened to various other faults of the feudal ſyſtem; a ſyſtem, which, in truth, never had any peculiar merit to boaſt, but the introduction of ſomething like a plan of *legiſlative repreſentation*, and of a *reſpect for women*.—In France, at the time of the revolution, many feudal evils exiſted in their original extent; and if the crown and ariſtocracy had ſeemed to correct ſome of them in their mode of adminiſtering them, yet it was not in a degree ſufficient to keep pace with that bleſſing of modern times, the *public opinion*.—In ſhort, ſo little reaſon is there to reſpect the ſenſe, or the juſtice of the ancients in matters of government, that there are few perſons of education of the preſent day, whatever be their talents, if they have but an honeſt mind, who are not better qualified to delineate the plan of a good conſtitution for a *new* people, than any legiſlator of antiquity, whether taken on this or on the other ſide of the chriſtian æra; becauſe, a modern legiſlator with *good intentions*, would proceed upon four data, which would remedy every leſſer error; namely, general juſtice, a fair repreſentation, œconomy, and ſimplicity.—The only proper terror therefore attending the reforms of the preſent age, are, leſt they ſhould be unneceſſarily precipitate; for, if gradual, time will ſoon produce a *mutual* conſent in their favour; and, when once effected, they will be for the acknowledged intereſt of every order, from the higheſt to the loweſt.

But we have ſtill another proof, that men poſſeſs a right to change their governments, from time to time, founded upon the fact that all governments are in many reſpects, *liable to be changed involuntarily*.—This may occur not only from their internal corruption, which

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is ſometimes in proportion to their degree of original perfection; but likewiſe from alterations which take place either in men or in their circumſtances. Thus, in a government, which in its primary ſtate perhaps may have ſtood exactly balanced, if the merit of any degraded claſs of men becomes newly acknowledged (as that of perſons without franchiſes in corporations;) or if rights have unwiſely been made local, where the ſcene of population has afterwards ſhifted itſelf; or if dominions have become ſubſequently either enlarged or diminiſhed; in theſe and ſimilar inſtances, the living are clearly not to omit accommodating their government to the actual poſition of the day, becauſe the dead had the ſuppoſed merit of ſuiting *their* government to the particular times in which they lived. In like manner, when the domeſtic effects of conqueſt diſappear any where, it is ſurely time to remove all political differences ſubſiſting between the vanquiſhed and their maſters;—and by conſequence the feudal ſyſtem, ought now every where immediately to be aboliſhed, as injuring both the public and the proprietors in it; for though it *originated* from ſyſtem of conqueſt and of perſonal military ſervice, yet not only the practice, but the very memory of both, are now in general wholly obliterated, except in hiſtory and law books.—Since political wiſdom then muſt thus neceſſarily be *relative*, becauſe man and his affairs are given to change, by what cauſe is it, that diſcuſſion and experience, which are ſo ſerviceable in other caſes, are to be uſeleſs with an object ſo varying as that of government. By what curious felicity is it, that the framers of a given government can have ſelected a form, not only the beſt poſſible for their *own* time, but even for *every other?*—Inſtead of ſelection however, it is known, that accident has been the parent of moſt governments;

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or elſe the will of a *few* who deſigned to ſerve themſelves only, and not the public.

But there is one argument upon the ſubject of changes in government, which is perfectly *ad hominem*, and therefore incontrovertible by our opponents; which is that various much applauded governments are in themſelves *the acknowledged fruit of revolution*.—Thus in England, two kings were dethroned within a ſpace of fifty years, and one of them executed, before we attained that revolution in which we glory; and lawyers, like Judge Blackſtone, gravely confeſs, that if a revolution ſhould return in this country, with *the preciſe circumſtances* attending that in queſtion, ſuch a revolution would be warranted even by *law*. It is not a century ſince a revolution was made in the government of Scotland, by its union with England; and Ireland has lately undergone material variations, and has ſtill others to experience.—What European government indeed of any conſequence, can fairly boaſt of much antiquity, beſides the Venetian, of which (ſince I am forced to obſerve upon it) the very antiquity is a reproach to human nature? for it exhibits a metropolis, which, in order to domineer over a large tract of *country*, takes part with one claſs of the country-inhabitants againſt the other; while its policy with reſpect to the people of the *capital*, is either to faſcinate them by amuſements and debauchery, or elſe to awe them by a police depending chiefly upon informers or aſſaſſins; this vaunted republic having for its chief merit the talent of perpetuating its own miſchiefs.—How ſingular then is it for any to affirm, that we are to ſubmit to whatever government *is once eſtabliſhed*, though eſtabliſhed by tyrants; and therefore, ſince tyranny in a given period is likely to have its turn in every country, and when once in exiſtence, is by the hypotheſis

hypotheſis to be made immortal, that tyranny muſt in time over-ſhadow the whole globe, and blacken the fate of all mankind.—If this doctrine be thought too revolting for our ſenſe and patience, where is the exception to it? If there is any, it muſt be this; that every government may be changed at all times by a majority (of a certain deſcription) of thoſe to whom it relates; and if this exception be admitted, the exception is large and honeſt enough wholly to deſtroy a rule ſo deteſtable.

The objection to alterations in political government, drawn from the evils attending the practical eſtabliſhment of thoſe alterations, has already been in part noticed, but requires to be farther ſlightly mentioned; for to *what* are thoſe evils generally owing? Surely not neceſſarily to the public, when making a demand of their rights; but commonly to thoſe who reſiſt the conceſſion of theſe rights. To borrow the phraſe of the vulgar, it is the *ſecond* blow which makes the ſtruggle. Why then, are we to "refuſe paying to a creditor, the "hundred pounds we owe him, becauſe he may claim "another hundred, to which he has no title?" Is not this to commit an *actual* injuſtice in our own perſons, from the fear of experiencing a *poſſible* injuſtice from others? And is not the denial the more remarkable, as the beſt hope which prudent men ought to entertain of ſaving a valuable reſidue of their preſent privileges, is fairly to ſurrender a certain uſeleſs portion of them, at a period when they can command a *liberal commutation for the ſacrifice.*

It is thus that I have endeavoured to prove, firſt, that nations ought not to be governed by *foreigners;* and next, that they may of right govern *themſelves.* The

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ſtrong part which I have here taken on the popular ſide, will at leaſt give the more weight to my opinions reſpecting the limitations, which ought to have place, as to *domeſtic* revolutions.—Theſe opinions form a medium between thoſe of Mr. Burke and Mr. Paine, as I ſhall prove by a ſhort criticiſm upon each of theſe authors.

And firſt, as to the *revolutionary* doctrines of Mr. Paine (for it is not my province here to examine his general notions of government) I muſt obſerve, that when he ſays, that the Britiſh nation has no conſtitution, he means, that it has had no *convention*; that is, none founded upon a direct and univerſal repreſentation. A conſtitution however ſimply means, that ſyſtem by which the ordinary governing powers of a nation are themſelves confeſſedly regulated; and it is plain, that we have a conſtitution in this ſenſe, notwithſtanding (as in the caſe of the Engliſh *common* law) a part of it is *unwritten*. To ſay at any time, that our conſtitution is endangered or perverted, is at once to admit, that it has an eſſence, though the beſt proof of its being and vitality, lies in the conſenting feelings of the nation. Without troubling myſelf therefore with a ſearch how our conſtitution *originated*, or even what is its *nature*, or its *merit*; I content myſelf with the aſſurance that it *exiſts*, and has obtained the ſucceſſive acquieſcence of the people from one generation to another.

A language like this, does not prevent either a reſolute defence of that conſtitution, or a reform; for it does not even preclude a revolution, which no one however more than myſelf can deprecate, unleſs under the moſt peculiar circumſtances. It clearly acknowledges that the people (or nation) are the ultimate

maſters; but it implies alſo, that they have already adopted a conſtitution, by which they are to remain bound *for ever*, till they approve of a variation; I ſay, for ever, becauſe ſome government muſt always exiſt, and therefore that which is already eſtabliſhed muſt *unceaſingly* exiſt till a change occurs; the moment of which, being indefinite, is not willingly to be pre-ſuppoſed. If a nation indeed appoints expreſs periods for the reviſion of its government, ſuch a proviſion will then form a part of *its conſtitution;* but ſuch a proviſion is not yet a part of *ours;* and in any event, it is more requiſite in the infancy of a conſtitution, when experience has not had time to furniſh its evidence upon the ſubject, than in its more advanced periods.—In great concerns indeed, certitude and tranquillity are ſo preferable to hazard and tumult, and to ameliorate is ſo much better than to form anew, that we may even be cheerfully reconciled to what (ſingular as it may ſeem) is certainly a part of our own conſtitution; namely, that a power of making eſſential changes in it ſhould reſide in the *ordinary* legiſlature; eſpecially of making ſuch changes as relate to the reſcinding of its own innovations, or to the carrying into better effect the ſpirit of the conſtitution; and eſpecially too in a country, where conventions are ſo little habitual, as to be likely to cauſe conſiderable ferment, ſhould they occur. If the people are properly enlightened and independent, alterations which are good, will be obtained in this manner, at little riſque, and bad ones will eaſily be prevented, or elſe be ſpeedily redreſſed; and if the people are not thus enlightened and independent, they are ſcarcely fit for appearing in a convention.—Can any man of judgment, or of feeling, indeed, be fond of encouraging *revolutions*, by which a nation is toſſed off

its baſe into the air, without its being certain which ſide will be left uppermoſt when it falls back again? Is the mere call of a theoriſt to lead this nation to hazard the *much* which it enjoys in peace, for a ſmall addition, which it can probably only obtain by blood, even if it obtains it at all, but which it may ſhed its blood without obtaining? The dog, who dropped the ſubſtance to bite at the ſhadow, experienced only the *loſs* of that ſubſtance; but a nation in the ſituation here painted, might not only experience temporary loſs, but dreadful *injury*.

What is the attempt at a revolution?—Is it not a ſtate-battle, in which, ſhould the people be conquered, the conqueror will act upon the ſyſtem of conqueſt; is it not an inter-regnum, even in caſe of their being ſuperior, in which they may afterwards have to ſtruggle with the villany or ignorance of their own chiefs and ſupporters; and is it not a moment, in which foreigners may intrude as enemies into their government, or as rivals into their concerns; in which the minds of men may become embittered, families be divided, friends ſpill the blood or plot the ruin of friends, and private duties of all ſorts be found in contention with public ones; trade alſo ſtagnate, credit vaniſh, and perhaps the fields be untilled, and the induſtry, morals and humanity of the people become impaired?—If it is a caſe in which there is *much* change called for, an oppreſſed people may indeed ſhew zeal, but will probably want temper and inſtruction; and if there is *little* required to be done, why call in a tempeſt to effect it? If the parties mean the bleſſing for their *own* day, alas, it may be dearly bought; and if for poſterity, it will be equally in time for them, if it can be effected through the channel of a mild and generous reform,

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which profeſſes to retain all which is good, and to remove only what is bad; which aſſumes inſtantly what is practicable, and prepares the way for what is difficult; and which by a juſt or indulgent proviſion for the incumbent, facilitates a more happy, as well as a more certain termination, of every abuſe.—Should the preſent ſtruggle, for example, on the ſide of France, iſſue proſperouſly, has not its war, and have not indeed its mere armaments, againſt its external and internal enemies, coſt it millions upon millions, more than its *plunder* has produced to it; and if its ſtruggle ultimately fails, will not France have loſt all, merely from wanting ſenſe and moderation.—In arbitrary governments, ſuch as was that of France, under its monarchy, or in deſpotic governments, like that of Turkey, attempts at Revolutions may often be plauſible, and when plauſible, will be juſtifiable; becauſe the provocation is always ſufficient, and things can hardly be made worſe, by an attempt failing. But in a country like England, which has a *quiet* means of reform open to it, and which, if it could accompliſh a Revolution, would have little to gain, becauſe it has comparatively little to alter; and becauſe that little muſt be effected with wiſdom and with lenity; I ſay, in England, the attempt at a Revolution, unleſs under very extraordinary circumſtances, and with a view to *preſerve*, rather than to improve, would be madneſs; and the propoſition to that effect, deſerving of every degree of reprobation and horror.—But were it otherwiſe, Revolutions do not require to be *preached*; for when they are practicable, the people will ſhew in a manner too marked to be miſtaken, whether they are ripe or not for joining in them; and the meaſures of the times in this reſpect, will of themſelves, be *up to the times*.—To aim, therefore, at

Revolutions, either needleſsly or prematurely, is an act of high imprudence, and even of injuſtice; for though friendly to free diſcuſſions, and convinced of the fair meaning of many of Mr. Paine's admirers; yet I muſt affirm, that certain parts of his writings have done great immediate miſchief to the cauſe of Liberty, and to its ſupporters, from having occaſioned a poſtponement of the great work of reform, and great unhappineſs to many individuals.—In ſhort, one of the moſt potent motives for a *reform* is, that it may extinguiſh that leaven, which at one period or another may generate a *Revolution*; a remedy too deſperate ever to be applied, except when the diſeaſe is ſtill more deſperate than itſelf; that is, only when real ſlavery oppreſſes or threatens. The love of change is an embarraſſing paſſion, often fatal to its poſſeſſors; and as there are few good changes, which are not gradual, "the "fearleſs great reſolve" ought to be left to the romance of the poets, and to be replaced by that better quality, ſo happily marked by the name of "an intrepid moderation;" which, while with firmneſs it chooſes a line of caution, with equal firmneſs executes whatever it has determined.

But in ſaying this, I cannot be deemed to vindicate that ſort of perſecution, which has occurred on this occaſion, againſt popular characters, popular bodies, and popular principles. It will be found a great miſtake, if ſlander is held equal to the work of reaſon; and if railing at an echo, is adopted as the means of ſilencing it; for theſe things may chance to be rendered back with intereſt, ſhould occaſions change.—At preſent, apparent proſperity and the abſence of all ſuſpicion, have tranquillized the public on the ſubject of politics; and while things retain ſuch an aſpect, men

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may forget the inquiry, whether they have *any fixed political ſecurity for the continuance of it*; but let room once be given, either for uneaſineſs or for jealouſy, and it will then ſoon appear, whether the mind of man in this country has not abandoned many prejudices, and made a progreſs, which will call for ſtrong grounds of ſatisfaction, before things can be calmed again.—Fooliſh, then, are thoſe, who place their ſafety on the mere poſture of events, and who feel themſelves ſecure when theſe are proſperous: for prudence requires ſuch a ſtability in every ſituation, that even *adverſe* circumſtances ſhall not injure it. And for this purpoſe, thoſe who are afraid of the progreſs of popular opinions have two meaſures before them, which are perfectly obvious, and both of which at preſent are completely in their power.—The one is, to compound with the public for the ſurrender of whatever the public is likely permanently to object to, while (if I may uſe the phraſe with decency) *a good market for it offers*. For example; rotten boroughs and tythes, might now be ſure of receiving ample commutation, in conſequence of the eaſy temper and wealth of the public; and the bargain to the public would be cheap at any price; for what is money to a nation, which could ſpend a hundred millions in acknowledged modes in the American war, and as much more in unaccounted modes, or in gains and proſperity which were foregone, during or in conſequence of that war. And as to the Crown, who is it that would not joyfully add to its ſplendor and means of gratification, if we were allowed in return to abate its influence; and having at the ſame time given a certain degree of independence to the Legiſlature, the farther progreſs of the executive power would no longer ſerve for alarm.—The ſecond meaſure is, to educate the poor, on whom

no other religious principle is ſeriouſly inculcated with a *political* view, than bigotry, or in other words, than hating their neighbour; and to whom no other mode of carrying their political *wiſhes* into effect, is pointed out, than that of violence. Violence has a double edge, which the doctrine of paſſive obedience will not, upon trying occaſions, be able to blunt; and no one can tell who it is five years hence, that will have to weild this formidable weapon.—If political objections are thus removed on one ſide, and if the manners of the populace are ſoftened on the other, no popular writer will be able to diſturb our internal peace; liberty will no longer ſeek to build its temple upon the ſands of democracy; nor ambition purſue that deep game, of *all or nothing*.

What I have ſaid on the ſubject of nations governing themſelves, has thus I truſt, been ſufficiently guarded, as far as reſpects the *Britiſh* nation;—but I ſtill deſire to have my doctrines accepted in their full force, as far as they reſpect the revolutions of *France* and of *Poland*, with a view to which alone I firſt introduced them.

It now remains to ſpeak of Mr. Burke.

I deſign neither to praiſe, nor to cenſure Mr. Burke, my concern being with his theories. Having endeavoured to overthrow his anti-revolutionary ſyſtem, I ſhall here ſeek to diſſipate the very materials of his edifice. Surrounded as it is by a thicket of metaphyſics, it is difficult to find an approach to it; but in this, however, lies our only difficulty. To remove that difficulty, I ſhall tranſlate his metaphyſics into plainer language. Where eloquence furniſhes the glaſs through which we are to view an object, however hideous and

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deformed that object may be in its native characters, it is eaſy by this means to diſguiſe its outlines, and to decorate every part of it with falſe priſmatic colours; and the only remedy conſiſts, in withdrawing from before the eye the deceitful medium, and truſting to daylight and our ſenſes.—It is thus that we ſhall proceed with Mr. Burke; rendering the ſubject as little abſtruſe, as its nature and his mode of treating it will admit. But I muſt premiſe that I ſhall anſwer no more of Mr. Burke, than can be conſidered as adverſe to my own propoſitions.

To alter a conſtitution once ſettled upon compact, whether tacit or expreſs, without the conſent of all the parties, ſays Mr. Burke, is to break that compact.—But may not a compact be *obligatory during its exiſtence*, and yet at the ſame time be *diſſoluble for urgent reaſons*. For example, if I apply to a phyſician to take charge of my health, under a general engagement on my ſide to conform to his preſcriptions: does it follow, that I can never change this phyſician for negligence; or does the contract imply, even while we remain together, that I muſt never decline his preſcriptions, when notoriouſly injurious; of which the patient ſurely, is but to feeling a judge?

But our author goes further: for he ſays, that though civil ſociety might be at firſt a *voluntary* act, it is continued down under a permanent covenant, attaching upon every new individual without any *formal act of his own*. His proof of this is, that men come into the community partaking conjointly of its benefits and of its duties; and that, duty being always compulſive, *duty* and *will* are contradictory terms; (the compulſion, in the caſe in queſtion, ariſing, he ſays, from the relations of man to man, and of man to God, which are

plainly *not matters of choice.*)—Thus, then, we have our author's ſyſtem extended againſt us not only for life, but even from generation to generation; and thence, to go back to our i uſtration, we are to conclude, that children muſt ſubmit through endleſs time, to the medical government of ſome certain perſons, merely becauſe theſe happen to be deſcended from their father's phyſician.—But let us obſerve here, as being curious in Mr. Burke's reaſoning, that mention is made only of the duty attaching to *one* party in the political compact, namely the people; notwithſtanding political governors have at leaſt as much duty to fulfil, as the people. If theſe governors, when they commit exceſſive wrongs, ſhould be thought for cogent reaſons, to be *inviolable;* yet ſurely it does not follow, that they are never to be *removeable;* or that their high and important duties are to be leſt without any correſponding ſanction for enforcing them; (eſpecially as a part of the crime of the government may have conſiſted, in depriving the people of the means of fulfilling its portion of the compact.)—But in the next place, let me aſk, what becomes of Mr. Burke's hypotheſis, in caſes where there is no compact, and where the conſtitution is neither wiſe nor juſt, or elſe has been perverted, or laſtly has failed in gaining the general approbation? Where is its obligation under ſuch circumſtances? Is there any thing in a nation, either greater or more important, than the whole nation itſelf; and ſhall the nation bow down before an idol, which is *not* of its own making.—Should any one here proceed in error, ſtill farther than Mr. Burke, and affirm, that compact and juſtice are wholly out of the queſtion, and that government belongs only to the ſtrongeſt; this is to put the matter at iſſue upon the queſtion of *force;* and mankind

kind have ſolely to conſult their prudence as to the *time* of reviving this conteſt, in caſes where the government which is impoſed is bad.—I ſhall not particularly reply in this place, to what Mr. Burke ſays of the true baſis of government, of its benefits, or of its duties; having already diſcuſſed theſe queſtions. But I think it neceſſary to add, that when, inſtead of *benefits*, a government ſhall have inflicted *curſes*, a nation ſeems then to be permitted by the tenor of this part of Mr. Burke's own hypotheſis, to inſtitute a better government; and when inſtituted, it will, I hope, under every hypotheſis, be held a duty to hand it unimpaired to poſterity; a duty, which we find from hiſtory, has been acknowledged by all nations in critical circumſtances.—As to Mr. Burke's grave appeal to the duty owing "from man to man, and from all "men to God," it is clear that this appeal takes the whole of this diſcuſſion *for granted;* and that if theſe duties are proved to operate on *my* ſide of the queſtion, inſtead of Mr. Burke's, I ſhall myſelf be intitled by virtue of his own reaſonings, to the benefit of ſuch appeal, in favour of my own poſitions. Let the reader therefore conſider this ſubject, either with a view to duty or to happineſs, to theory or to practice (which in large objects often come to the ſame thing), and decide the conteſt.

The next poſition of Mr. Burke, I confeſs ſurpriſes me.—Wiſhing to deny, that the baſis of government depends upon the *majority*, he ſays, that a people being but a corporation, when they break the compact which gives them a corporate form, they are no longer a *people;* and that among diſbanded men, no *majority* can operate, ſince one man cannot bind *another*.—It is ſingular, that a perſon who thus calls for *unanimity* in a ſtate of nature, ſhou d make numbers paſs for ſo little in a ſtate of ſociety.

ciety. But he forgets, that this diſbanded body is not more diſbanded than it was *previous* to the preſent ſtate of ſociety; and that it is difficult to prove, that the diſſolved compact was *itſelf* originally formed, in conſequence of any unanimity.—As to majorities, the neceſſity of reſorting to them, ariſes from the moral impoſſibility of obtaining a frequent unanimity; ſo that if the ſociety has to *decide* upon various queſtions, a deciſion cannot be had, without the means of deciſion are given, namely, the voice of a majority; which majority may, at pleaſure, fix its *own quantum*, in all ſubſequent queſtions.

But Mr. Burke, who will not allow of majorities, nevertheleſs allows of caſts and privileged characters, under the name of a *natural* ariſtocracy; in great multitudes of whom, acting together, he recognizes the *people*; without whom (that is, without which portion of the people), he apparently admits neither influence nor contravention to exiſt, on the part of the public, in matters of government, (even if he admits it then.)—I muſt here obſerve, that Mr. Burke's natural ariſtocracy wholly excludes that claſs of men, who, without being able to take part in public affairs themſelves, yet can appreciate characters ſufficiently well to appoint repreſentatives to act for them; and this I conſider as a ſufficient anſwer to his hypotheſis on this ſubject.

Here then for a while quitting this writer, let me revert to that momentous queſtion, whether the natural rights of man (as they are called) are at any time to ſtand compromized and affected by incidental circumſtances?—I anſwer boldly, that they are, for firſt, large and extenſive concerns, in proportion to their magnitude, have a claim to be ſeparated from more general rules,

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and to be conſidered as diſtinct caſes, and to be decided upon as ſuch according to their own bearings and operations; and in the next place, I take the firſt *right of man* to be, *that of being as happy as poſſible, conſiſtently with the ſame right in other men;* (every other right being ſubordinate to this leading right, and ſerving only as a *means* to this end.) In the vaſt ſyſtem of ſociety, therefore, if it ſhould happen, that a large deſcription of men ſhould be found below that temperament, either of virtue or of knowledge, which is neceſſary to enable them to aſſiſt either directly or indirectly, in judging of the general welfare; the happineſs of the whole will require (as is ſhewn in my letters) the excluſion of ſuch portion from all interference in politics, (at leaſt unleſs in particular caſes;) an excluſion, which, though it is much to be lamented, and as ſoon as poſſible to be terminated, yet is, with reſpect to all good purpoſes, only nominal; ſince the *exerciſe* of a faculty of judging is only denied to thoſe who really are deſtitute of the faculty itſelf.—In a ſtate of nature, then, and preparatory to forming a convention, men may be ranged into three claſſes, with reſpect to politics; namely, thoſe who can judge for themſelves, thoſe who can find others to judge for them, and thoſe who can do neither properly. Delegation (which is neceſſary both upon a *mechanical* principle for numerous bodies, and alſo to impart in the preſent inſtance the means of action to the middle claſs) mixes the firſt and ſecond claſs into one, and thus ſecures the co-operation of the greateſt poſſible portion of the ſociety. I ſee no other procedure than this to be purſued in thoſe ſtates, which pretend to the freeſt ſyſtems of repreſentation; and in all other ſtates, great as is the bleſſing of a free repreſentation, it ought at firſt, like light and food to men who have been famiſhed

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in dungeons, to be charily adminiſtered.—Thus we ſee that our chief and prominent political right is, that we ſhould be happy; that education is a great inſtrument in forming our characters; that the deſideratum of all ſocieties ought to be, to impart rights and bleſſings to the greateſt number; that acting by delegation and by majorities, are neceſſary mechanical expedients; and that ſince a *minority* muſt exiſt in all ſocieties, inſtead of attempting to leſſen the numbers of it by perſecution, the eaſe of this minority ought to be conſulted by every indulgence, as the beſt conſolation for the neceſſity of ſubjecting it to general laws. Shall a a diſciple of Mr. Burke, after allowing the original inſufficiency of one man to bind another by the means of the voice of a *majority*, contend for the competence of one primary vote of unanimity, given only by hypotheſis, confirmed only by mere majorities ſince the flood by a like hypotheſis, paſſed perhaps with the crudeneſs or violence of a French decree, and in any event incroached upon by ſuch numberleſs innovations, that contrary to the ſhip of Delos, it no longer admits a ſcholaſtic queſtion whether its identity and continuity is not long ſince utterly vaniſhed; I ſay, ſhall a diſciple of Mr. Burke, (even ſhould his maſter refuſe ſuch a boon of juſtice,) view with any other ſentiment than that of tenderneſs, all modern aberrations from unanimity, whether in church or ſtate, and contend that governments ought to be conducted upon a principle of excluſion, rather than that of comprehenſion?—So much, then, muſt ſuffice for general notions on the ſubject of revolutions, as far as thoſe of Mr. Burke and myſelf ſtand in contradiction; referring to Mr. Burke's *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, as his lateſt exhibition of his own.

In

In ſpeaking of Mr. Burke's noted phraſe of the "*ſwiniſh multitude*," uſed in a former publication, it is with reluctance I obſerve, that a diſdain of the poor is generally accompanied with a diſpoſition to applaud the great. But if the poor are really of the deſcription of ſwine, the ſpell of the inchantreſs, Circe, which has been potent enough to effect it, I ſay, this ſpell conſiſts only of ignorance and vice; and the ſole mode of removing their beſtiality, and to make them fit companions again for the too contemptuous Ulyſſes, is to communicate to them knowledge and virtue. The poor, lured by ſpecious pretexts and promiſes, have been deceived into their preſent odious ſituation.

On thrones around, with downy coverings grac'd,
With *ſemblance fair*, th' unhappy men ſhe plac'd.
But venom'd was the bread and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to *darken* all the ſoul:
Soon in the luſcious feaſt themſelves they loſt,
And drank oblivion of their native coaſt.
Inſtant, her circling wand the goddeſs waves,
To hogs transforms them,—and the ſty receives.
No more was ſeen the human form divine;
Head, face, and members, briſtle into ſwine:
Still curſt with ſenſe, their *minds* remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Meanwhile the Goddeſs in diſdain, beſtows
The maſt and acorn, (*brutal food!*) and ſtrows
The fruits of cornel, as their feaſt around.
—Think'ſt thou by wit to model their eſcape?
Sooner ſhalt thou, a ſtranger to thy ſhape,
Fall prone, their equal. Firſt, thy danger know;
Then, take the antidote the gods beſtow;
And haſtening to the ſties, ſet wide the door,
Urge forth and drive the briſtly herd before.

—Unweildy,

—Unweildy, out they ruſh with general cry
Enormous beaſts, diſhoneſt to the eye.
Now touch'd with counter-charms, they change again,
And ſtand *majeſtic*, and recall'd to *men*.
Thoſe hairs, of late that briſtled every part,
Fall off, miraculous effect of art!
Till all the form in full proportion riſe,
More young, more large, more graceful to our eyes.

For myſelf (who *nihil humanum a me alienum puto*,) I am thoroughly convinced with Rouſſeau, that if *men* are bad, *man* himſelf is good; or at leaſt, which is the ſenſe in which I accept the poſition, capable of being rendered ſo by education and care. It is indeed a ſort of begging of the principle, firſt to neglect the poor, and then to ſay, that they are too bad either for truſt or for enjoyment; and that therefore we muſt not throw our pearls before them. But the poet tells us, that this is the natural progreſs of the paſſions: odi *profanum* vulgus, et *arceo*.—In contemplating however the *broad pyramid*, which (according to every one), repreſents ſociety in its actual ſtate, I conceive, that thoſe who form the lower portions of it, may, in conſequence of the power of *knowledge* to direct, of *mechanics* to aid, of *œconomy* to ſpare, and of *peace* to protect; I conceive, I ſay, that the poor may eaſily have their labours leſſened, their comforts increaſed, and their gratifications extended beyond their preſent meaſure, without either loſs, riſque or inconvenience to the opulent; and the more ſo, in proportion to their education. Is it not a general ſcandal that the chief conſolation of the poor, in moſt countries, is liquor; and that nothing is thought ſo dreadful, as to let them retain any time at their command; though, when men are rendered innocent by

education, what can be a more obvious or cheaper indulgence to them, than *leiſure?*—Oh! hiſtory, unfold thy pages, reddened with blood and blackened with crimes, and tell us, why it is, that our rulers *waſte* the labour of man by wars, and neglect his education. Is it becauſe, if they improved mankind, they muſt improve themſelves?—After all that we have ſuffered, on account of their ambition, are they yet, then, to learn; firſt, how little wars add to their felicity; and next, that we, their ſubjects, are always too happy, when they purſue merely a *negative* conduct.

I ſay this, fearleſs of miſrepreſentation; for my letters prove, that I am no enemy to kings, who are formed to give great conſiſtence to an old government, in conſequence of having a deep ſtake in it; and who by preoccupying the poſt of ambition, ſerve to quiet the attempts of all pretenders; for as to the expence of kings, it is to be held as nothing to a great ſtate, and eſpecially if it is the price of quiet.—Our own conſtitution has many excellencies. I am not critical to learn its origin, any more than is the Egyptian, to trace back the Nile to its ſource, as long as it fertilizes his fields. I find limited monarchy eſtabliſhed, and I confirm it (as I have a right to do) by my aſſent; convinced, that it only requires to be practiſed upon its own principles, to make us happy. And when we look through Europe, it muſt certainly ſeem a peculiar bleſſing and pride to us, that a man can riſe up in our ſenate, and warn the prince whenever he is doing wrong; and thus fearleſsly embody and give voice to the public opinion.—If a reform ſhall take place in parliament, its votes will tell the ſame to the prince, ſtill more efficacioufly; which may make reform ſeem terrible to a courtier. But let thoſe who poſſeſs theſe timid ſentiments, conſult the

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tenor of our experience, and they will find, as of late, that whenever the people poſſeſs eaſe, and think they have ſufficient ſecurity for its continuance, they grow careleſs in matters of government; and if wars ſhall be avoided in future, as the people will thence grow richer, they will thence again become more indifferent about their taxes.—Let a reform then anticipate their wiſhes; that thoſe who have to grant it, may *themſelves* adjuſt its manner and its meaſure.—But if it is to ſtand adjourned to trying times, (and who can be the warant for futurity,) and if the public ſhall have to preſcribe the whole, the changes, whenever they occur, may then become more extenſive and harſh.—But it is not in this view only, that reform is neceſſary to our ſecurity, but in another; for what has moſt contributed to give or to preſerve our freedom is, firſt, our inſular ſituation, which has ſuperſeded the uſe of a ſtanding army, and at the ſame time has favoured trade and independent fortunes in the middling ranks; and next, the circumſtance of our poſſeſſing a family upon the throne, which till of late years, has found it neceſſary for its *own* ſafety, to maintain revolutionary principles. On the whole then, when the ſtate of public affairs is duly conſidered by wiſe and good men, they will be more and more convinced, that nothing is more adviſeable, than a ſenſible and anticipated reform: But, alas! who dares indulge himſelf in the proſpect of it, when it is ſo commonly the nature of man, to wait for a death-bed repentance.

I had hoped to have taken here my long, long leave of the public. I ſhall here indeed conclude my preface, as I have already done my letters, yet I deſign to venture once more upon the indulgence of the public, by adding

a *ſhort*

a *ſhort poſtſcript** ; extorted by the late declarations made from authority, on the ſubject of co-operating with the concerted ſovereigns of Europe, and reſiſting all accommodation with France.—If error is obſtinate, truth alſo is fertile, and I hope it will finally prevail by its own operation, not only over *error*, but over an oppoſition ſtill more *wilful*, if any ſuch ſhall exiſt.

A CALM OBSERVER.

POSTSCRIPT TO THE *PREFACE.*

IT is with reluctance that I have felt myſelf called upon to protract my communications, in conſequence of the unexpected and increaſing dangers of public affairs. But truſting that apology will be ſuperfluous, if I can intereſt the public attention, I ſhall proceed to ſtate the recent declarations made by authority, on the ſubject of the war with France, with a view to follow them with remarks.

The ſpeech of his Majeſty, then, I muſt obſerve, announces no preſent deſign of liſtening to negotiation, but ſolely the purſuit of peace through the medium of *war;* it offers no hope even of an *early* iſſue to the conteſt; and it gives the melancholy double notice, that we are to perſevere in vigorous exertions by *land*, and that we are actually embarked in a concert with *foreign* powers.—Miniſtry have declared farther, in their parliamentary characters, that any preſent negotiation would

* I did not expect that my poſtſcript would have run to its preſent length, till I took my pen in hand, two days after the delivery of the Speech from the throne. Indeed, three new paragraphs have been added at p. xl. xlii. and xliv.

be impolitic and unſeemly, if not ungrateful, towards the confederates; fraudulent and diſcouraging towards the nation; nugatory in itſelf, from the want of proper organs to conduct it on the ſide of France; and improvident, by betraying our terms at preſent, when ſucceſs may enable us to improve them hereafter. They have ſtated, that war has not yet performed its office upon the French by producing either terror, ſecurity, or indemnity; that the evils which it is inflicting upon ourſelves, are not of an amount to require its termination; that it is new in politics to ceaſe a defenſive war, merely becauſe an enemy ceaſes his aggreſſion; that if the war is not purſued effectually, at preſent, it may ſoon again return upon us; and that nothing therefore can make peace adviſable under ſuch circumſtances, but neceſſity, or the overthrow of obnoxious perſons or principles in France, or a diminution of the French power and an increaſe of our own. As to the mode of purſuing the war, it is to be either external or internal; Mr. Burke adding, with the concurrence (as I am informed) of Mr. Pitt, that it is lawful to employ inſurrections, diſſentions, and diſtreſſes in every ſhape; and both of them aſſerting, that it is allowable, if the war gives opportunity, to change the government of France. —I have aimed to make this ſtatement correct, becauſe having to combat the war, and not the miniſtry, it would only be to increaſe my trouble, were I to conjure up phantoms merely to lay them again.

The firſt and moſt natural obſervation here is, that the profeſſed objects of the war are actually obtained, by the ſafety of thoſe allies, of whom the immediate attack was ſolely occaſioned by ourſelves; by the repulſe of the French from all thoſe territories, where alone we originally pretended to dread their eſtabliſhment;

ment; by the unanimous repeal of the French decree, reſpecting interference in the interior of foreign countries; and by the demonſtrated nullity of our domeſtic dangers from French intrigues.—If we wiſh for farther conceſſions or ſecurity from France, what is more natural, (and what more conſiſtent, in the phraſe of Mr. Burke, with "our relation to man and to God,") than to *demand* ſuch, in the way of negotiation; which has a *ſecond* time, knocked loudly and uninvited at our doors; and which may be purſued without any relaxation in the immediate operations of the war. Avarice itſelf can offer no objection to this procedure; ſince it is eaſy to ſignify, that the terms to be required now, if refuſed by the French, will hereafter be inhanced, in proportion to our ſubſequent expences and advantages.—Does it happen, then, that a ſtill worſe motive, than even *avarice*, precludes negotiation; and that we are afraid to diſcloſe the real objects of the war, too *early and diſtinctly* to the Britiſh nation, leſt they ſhould prove too revolting to them?

But the French, it is triumphantly ſaid, are not to be truſted!—And who in politics is to be truſted? Shall we aſk Poland, Bavaria, Holland, or Turkey, whether we are to put confidence in *princes?* What are military and naval eſtabliſhments; what is the uſual fate of treaties, which become multiplied from their very fragility; what the applauſe given to conquerors, the cold pity lent to thoſe who are conquered, and the reputed impoſſibility of eſtabliſhing a congreſs to decide national differences by pacific arguments; what are all theſe, I ſay, but ſo many proofs, that faith and juſtice do not inhabit courts?—If we allow, therefore, that the French, *like others*, are not to be truſted; ſtill it will not follow, that they are not, like others, to be *negotiated with*.—

Treaties of peace have other ſanctions beſides integrity. They reſt, for example, upon the calculations of an adverſary, reſpecting the probability of ſucceſs in a war, the comparative coſt of it, and the concurring zeal or obedience of the nation which is to ſupport it.—And here let us aſk, whether the *new* government of France, after having ſeated itſelf among the potentates of the earth by an univerſal ratification of its revolution, will be likely to renew the war upon the late frantic plan, which has excited all Europe againſt it, and rendered it impoſſible for it to find an ally? Let us remember again and again, that one of the chief offences given by the monarchy to France, was its belligerent paſſion; that France in the early moments of its revolution, was profoundly indifferent to foreign affairs, though inſulted by many, and menaced by all foreign powers; and that it did not invent its ſyſtem of fraternity for the poor ſilly reaſon, that a *tavern meeting had propoſed it*, but to enable it to turn its then *new* conqueſts in the Netherlands to ſome account.—But experience keeps a dear ſchool, in which even fools learn wiſdom, and in this ſchool the French illuſion has been cured. The French have invited, and none have liſtened; they have, "piped and none have danced;" the enthuſiaſm even of the *commonalty* in foreign countries, is ſo far from being with them, that it is againſt them; and the ſoldiers and ſeamen of their enemies, whom they expected to ſee deſerting by bands in order to come and receive bribes and liberty among them, hug their prejudices and even their chains, and fight againſt them with an inveteracy which ſeeks their very extermination. The ſame enthuſiaſts, therefore, who have riſen unanimouſly to vindicate their *rights*, and to *expel* foreigners; will not march again into foreign countries,

to

to write leſſons with their blood, for unwilling pupils; nor will they waſte their treaſure, or expoſe their territory and commerce to ravage, for the purpoſe of inſtructing thoſe, in whom they have no intereſt; and who may ſo much more eaſily be inſtructed by example, by printing-preſſes, and by time. And as the new government of France is more popular than that of other countries, there is no nation which is more certain of ſeeing theſe wiſhes for a ſyſtem of peace, fulfilled, than that of France.—Beſides, if candor will here for a moment recollect itſelf, it muſt be ſeen, that in all new purſuits, the mind of man is apt to over-act its part. In medicine, it is long before its beſt part is found to conſiſt, in following nature, or in doing nothing; ſimplicity and the abſence of effort, are alſo among the lateſt acquiſitions of taſte; toleration (as it is improperly called) and charity, are ſtill leſſons to be learned by the pretended diſciples of one, who commanded us to love our neighbours; theoriſts of all kinds, in proportion as they are perſuaded of the importance of their projects, are apt to ſeek for the iron hand of power to ſupport them; and if the ſpread of *liberty* has, in like manner, been attempted by forcible or irregular means, thoſe at leaſt have no right to complain, who by a like violence, have ſought to propagate ſlavery. The proſpect was magnificent and ſeemed feaſible to the enthuſiaſt, of being able to liberate the whole world from bondage; and when ſovereigns had *firſt* concerted a league againſt them, the attack upon ſovereigns ſeemed a meritorious retaliation.—But the folly has firſt paſſed away on that ſide, where it was at leaſt the moſt diſintereſted and beſt intended; and if the cruſade *againſt* France has not been abandoned as ſincerely, as the cruſade which it afterwards provoked to iſſue *out* of

France, it is ſolely becauſe *we* interfere to keep up the war. Each ſide, in ſhort, with our permiſſion, may now eaſily be brought to a better underſtanding, than if the war had not occurred; eſpecially as France has ſufficient ſelf-conceit to think, that ſhould her bordering neighbours remain only as they did, (without being converted, as was projected, into barriers of freemen between herſelf and arbitrary princes;) ſhe is at leaſt as ſafe, as was Louis XIV. when he had rendered all Europe adverſe to him.

If the French are ſaid *formally to diſclaim the policy and obligation to treaties*, we ſhall by varying the words, and by ſpecifying the different deſcriptions of treaties, ſoon detect what, by a gentle name, I ſhall only here call a miſapprehenſion in their accuſers.—Treaties, it muſt be remarked, are various; for they conſiſt of offenſive alliances, defenſive alliances, treaties for mercenary forces, treaties for commercial and other civil objects, and treaties for peace. The French abhor *offenſive* alliances; which are indeed every where exploded, except in thoſe very cabinets, which are now combined againſt France. They conceive alſo thoſe alliances which are *defenſive*, to be ſuperfluous to powerful ſtates; unequal alſo in the burthen they impoſe on the ſide of the honeſt, becauſe by the honeſt only, they are ſtrictly obſerved; premature alſo, inaſmuch as caſes of *ſtrict* defence will commonly produce aſſiſtance, at the moment; and laſtly, too implicit and peremptory in their nature to be ſatisfactory, as they leave little room for the diſcuſſion of the cauſe of the quarrel. It will not be pretended, that France has any need of foreign *mercenaries*; and an averſion therefore to this deſcription of force is peculiarly natural to a country, which has deſigned upon the return of peace to diſband

nearly

nearly the whole of its ſtanding armies. As to *commercial* treaties, as the French theoriſts are in general advocates for a free trade, we muſt not wonder at their diſlike to enter into bonds, either for its control, or for its præternatural encouragement. But as to treaties of *peace*, the French have never in any period or in any manner denied the wiſdom of ſuch, and much leſs the obligation created by them; for this would in effect have been to declare for the perpetuity of war.—In four caſes, in which treaties have lately been diſcuſſed in France, in nothing have they varied from theſe principles. France acknowledged the operation of a defenſive league with Spain; and armed to aſſiſt her in the quarrel reſpecting Nootka Sound; for which the immediate return of Spain is, a *faithleſs* attack upon France. When the machinations of Auſtria had excited Europe againſt her, ſhe declared, as ſhe had right to do, that the treaty of 1756, which was always onerous, was by this injury *ipſo facto* voided. When General Monteſquiou had covenanted with Geneva for the preſervation of old treaties which reſpected the internal government of Geneva, and for punctilios which threw a doubt upon the *good faith* of France; ſhe ſubſtituted a new treaty, whoſe principles for my own part, I know not how to controvert. And as to their commercial treaty with England, our alien act and proceedings reſpecting corn, may ſhew, that nothing but violence led them to diſſolve, what yet they had long complained of as unequal.—With regard to the diſmiſſal of the Swiſs troops, none will affirm that the officers of theſe corps, were inclined to ſerve the new government with the neceſſary fidelity and zeal; and the ſeduction of the men was only deemed a conſequence of the French theory, that every adult perſon may chooſe his country; and though indemnity was due to the

Swiſs officers who honorably (as may be thought) for themſelves retired, yet ſince the French profeſſed to grant it, whatever is ſhort of their due is matter of detail, more than of *principle*, and ſubject at all times to negotiation and reparation.—With regard to the affair of the Scheldt, it was a meaſure (and perhaps a treacherous meaſure) originating in their executive council; and which admits of much diſcuſſion, on both ſides; but in which, on the whole, I think the French clearly wrong, even upon their own principles.—If the French have wiſhed, however, to change their allies, is not this common alſo to all governments, which are ſwayed by the fluctuating paſſions or intereſts of *individuals*, whether they are kings or miniſters, or the wives, miſtreſſes, flatterers or domeſtics of ſuch; all of whom are liable to the ſtill farther change conſequent upon death? And is not all this tendency to change, peculiarly common in caſes of revolution?—But it muſt always be remembered, in favour of the French, that when they were forced to diſcuſs the queſtion of treaties, they always conſidered ſubſiſting treaties, as having a proviſional operation*.

If the *fluctuations of parties* in France are conceived to be an obſtacle to peace, let us remember, that among other fluctuations, better men may hereafter arrive at power in France; and that nothing can be more friendly to the progreſs of ſuch a party, than peace.—Bad however, as the preſent men may be thought, peace is *their* wiſh alſo. Deſperation may change that wiſh, and produce two circumſtances, each of a nature to aggravate the other; firſt, that of the rendering the French as military as the early followers of Mohammed;

* Three new paragraphs follow here.

and

and next, that of eſtabliſhing among them more or leſs of an agrarian law. Should only half of the French nation, by retiring to the ſtrong holds of France, be able to adopt the ſyſtem in queſtion, that half might ſoon communicate it by force, neceſſity, or contagion to the other half. And againſt this evil, the holding in pay a knot of miſcreants ſtationed at *Paris*, will be no ſecurity whatever.—When *immenſe maſſes of men* are thrown into action by powerful motives, it is then that we are in the ſituation to ſee the greateſt phænomena, of which human nature is capable; not ſuch as are familiar to the ſhort-lived, contracted experience of men in office; but ſuch are recorded in the immenſe book of *ages*.—I pretend not in this to propheſy, but to caution; conceiving that the magnitude of the evil, ſhould it in any degree arrive, will go far to atone for the ſuppoſed defect of probability in it.—Inſtead therefore of talking of the fluctuation of parties, let us advert to the fluctuation of *events;* and recollect, that if all France ſhould be conquered, except a ſingle faſtneſs, from that faſtneſs a new deluge may iſſue to overſpread Europe. The proud phlegm and inflexible ſeverity of a German conqueror can never fail to revolt the gay conceit and eaſy ſociability of a Frenchman; and no effort of France will be ſo terrible as *that*, which it will make, when loaded with chains, to throw off ſuch a conqueror.—Why then are we to purſue the war at ſuch riſque, and to puſh the ſpring back to its laſt meaſure of reaction? Why by ſhort-ſighted, (and if I may be allowed a ſtrong expreſſion) by *half*-witted politics, are we to endanger the riſe of a war upon a *new* principle, which may laſt for centuries to come, which will firſt be abandoned (upon account of its expence) by the Germans who began it, will prove a never-dying torment to its cloſer neighbours,

neighbours, will engender new revolutions by the diſtreſs it will every where occaſion, and by rendering France the reſort of every hardy adventurer, may form a new Algiers in the heart of Europe? Why do we not try the experiment of letting the evil die away by quiet, which will as naturally happen as waves ſlacken, when the winds ceaſe?—If we ridicule theſe fears, becauſe of the French diviſions, then ſurely we may venture upon peace with a nation *ſinking from its diviſions!*

If the queſtion ſhould recur, then, with *whom* are we to treat, let the old anſwer alſo recur: treat and make peace at all times, with thoſe who can make war; with thoſe who can give orders to 400,000 men to fight, or to diſband; and who, when they ſpeak for themſelves, ſpeak for the men in France who are moſt turbulent and reſtleſs.—Peace, like rain to the parched earth, or like repoſe after agony, is too great a bleſſing to be rejected by a harraſſed and blockaded nation, becauſe concluded only by a nominal government, or by baſe authors. The war will not hereafter eaſily be renewed for mere ambition, though now continued for defence; for to renew it would be dangerous as well as futile, unleſs the nation ſhould concur, contrary to its intereſts and to probability. Beſides, the men with whom we may have to treat in France, are not military, but civil; their object being internal, and not external, and if plunder is their deſign, they will naturally wiſh to have it free from danger. Mere peace, in ſhort, conſidered as the ceſſation of war, is a bargain ſo good, that every party ſucceeding to thoſe who make it, muſt, for its own ſake, reſpect it, ſince *lucri bonus odor ex quolibet*;—But if we add *hard conditions* to the peace, the peace then neceſſarily becomes precarious (and would become ſo, even if made with a monarch) but ſolely ſo through the fault of thoſe who impoſe them.

The

The confederates, indeed, will make no ſacrifice of their ambition to human happineſs, by the offer of a fair and equal peace, till difficulties ſhall no longer leave it as a voluntary meaſure. Something better, however, ought to be looked for from ourſelves; though in ſpite of all my anxieties, I am unable by any good arguments which at preſent occur to me, wholly to acquit thoſe who govern us of the imputation of ambition.—And if the imputation of ambition made by ſome be juſt, the concealment of our terms of peace will then no longer prove an enigma; for the diſcloſure of harſh terms might diſcourage ourſelves, and exaſperate France, if made previous to our having that ſtock of conqueſts in hand, which is neceſſary to inſure the ſupport of harſh terms on one ſide, and their acceptance on the other.—It would be eaſy to place our ſubject in varying lights; but reverting again to the ſimple queſtion, with whom we are to treat, I anſwer in the words of ſcripture, *with the powers that be.* Allowing that there ſhould be ſome danger of the peace not being well obſerved, yet this danger is not ſo great, that it is not worth an experiment; beſides, that the experiment is leſs to England, Holland, and Pruſſia, (whoſe boundaries are defined towards France, by the interpoſition of ſea, or of Auſtrian or other foreign territory,) than to others; and ſhould the experiment fail, and the war return, we are as ſure of having allies, as France is of being diveſted of them. If inſtead alſo of ſpending ſecret ſervice-money in producing diſcords in France, we employed it in paying half a dozen of their authors and chiefs, to exert themſelves in reviving thoſe pacific theories which had lately, to our certain knowledge, begun to pervade the whole of France, we ſhould take away the ſole ſtimulant to war, and "place our padlock upon their

their *minds*."—But were all theſe ſuggeſtions to prove miſtaken, we have ſtill to ſtate, that the danger of an infirm peace, and a renewed war, is not comparable to the danger ſpringing from the concert of princes, and the continuance of the triumvirate or duumvirate in the eaſt of Europe, ſhould France become crippled or divided; for however cunningly we may think ourſelves poſſeſſed of the ſecret of the ſeveral cabinets of Europe at the preſent moment, we forget that men may paſs, and *opportunities* remain, and that our danger is not greateſt from perſons but from *things*.

But let us next ſeriouſly conſider what is to happen, if we do *not* treat with *the men of the day?* If we fight to bring other men into power in France who ſhall better ſuit our fancy, this will be to render the war a war of interference in the interior of France; and we ſhall find it much harder to bring France into any given ſtate of order, than to throw it into diſorder; in ſhort, to do than to undo. If we waſte blood and treaſure till this change ſhall be effected, or till we can fight no longer, this alſo, in effect, may be to make the diſtreſs of the Engliſh nation the only point of termination to the war; and if we ſhall then, after all, find that we have ſtill none but men of the ſame deſcription to treat with, it will be to aggravate that diſtreſs by diſgrace and mortification. Again, if the war againſt France ſhould prove without ſucceſs in Europe, (for its foreign poſſeſſions, which are of little comparative moment to either party in the eyes of a wiſe man, will depend upon events in Europe,) the French, in ſuch caſe, may refuſe thoſe very terms to which they would now accede; and all the intermediate loſs of blood and property will then have been more than thrown away; eſpecially as the confederates, in the mean time, may have made

made their own conditions, or at leaſt have become languid in their exertions, from prudence or from neceſſity. And if, in the mean time alſo, ſuch parts of Ireland, Scotland, and even England, as are now more than lukewarm in the war, ſhould become ardent againſt it; and if other parts of theſe realms, which now ſupport it from *confidence* in the Miniſtry, or from ignorance, (for the country is always ſlower of conviction than towns, and yet, as in the caſe of the American war, their minds borrow eyes from their feelings;) if theſe, I ſay, ſhould retract their confidence, then the Miniſtry will poſſeſs a ſituation ſomewhat leſs triumphant than the preſent.—Such are the anſwers to the queſtion, with whom are we to treat? that is, to treat for ending a war which it was originally unwiſe to begin; and of which the preſent objects are at leaſt hazardous and undefined, if they are not alſo unjuſt.—If counter-treaties with the confederates tie our hands, they certainly have been made contrary to all remonſtrance, and may chance not to be kindly conſidered by the nation, to *whoſe* intereſts they are not neceſſary; and by whom they can only, in that caſe, be viewed as officious and ſubtle pledges to bind it to a war, in which it is not naturally to be deemed as a principal.

Among the pretended original *objects* of the preſent war, the fear of domeſtic factions once held a foremoſt rank; but it now appears ſo little of a cauſe for *war*, that it ſeems only a ſource of ridicule. The abſolute impoſſibility in adminiſtration of proving one inſtance of conſpiracy or inſurrection, where it had been ſo laviſh in its charges of each of them, and the momentous meaſures which were cotemporary with and aided by thoſe charges, lead us to ſuſpect a ſecret

connection between the two; and that there was a plot on the ſide of *adminiſtration*, inſtead of the people. We ſhall perhaps ſee the ſecret ſolved by our immortal Shakeſpear.

> Upon the corner of the moon ——
> There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
> I'll catch it ere it come to ground;
> And that, diſtilled by magic ſlights,
> Shall raiſe ſuch artificial ſprights,
> As by the ſtrength of their illuſion,
> Shall draw him on to his confuſion:
> He ſhall ſpurn fate, ſcorn death, and bear
> His hopes 'bove wiſdom, grace and fear:
> And you all know, *ſecurity*
> Is mortal's chiefeſt enemy.

But without waiting for the explanation from "the "little ſpirit ſitting in the *foggy* cloud," next alluded to by the poet, let us rejoice that this *pretence* for maintaining the war is now finally done away by the King's own authority; for the ſpeech ſays, that there has been "a *gene-* "*ral and zealous* concurrence of his ſubjects in the *ſenti-* "*ment* for ſupporting the eſtabliſhed conſtitution." So that, after making due allowance for the numbers of the lukewarm and the neutral, it is clear that the diſaffected reſidue in this kingdom can no longer call for an inſtrument ſo important and ſo inapplicable, as that of a foreign war, for keeping them under ſubjection.

The vaunted debts of *gratitude* contracted towards our allies, ſeem mentioned more as a cover, than as a real motive for continuing the war; and the oſtentatious mention of what common policy would lead us to affect to undervalue, perhaps, that the war has deeper objects than common, eſpecially as the pretence is contrary to fact.—

Has

Has not, indeed, the appearance of Holland and ourſelves in the field, cauſed a moſt important *diverſion* in their favour? Did not the ſpecific attack of Holland and Maeſtricht drain Belgia of its new tenants, and open it to the return of the confederate forces? Are we not, therefore, placing the favour on the wrong ſide? And do not we gratuitouſly make ourſelves out as *principals* in the war, to our own detriment. Why are we to fight for all, pay for all, and wait the convenience of all, and again become the packhorſe and paymaſter of Europe? The *honour* of England is, in this caſe, no otherwiſe committed, than as we may chooſe to commit it to folly.—In the Ruſſian war, we officiouſly ſought to defend Pruſſia, without being being bound to it; and the ſame we did again lately for Holland; and, anxious for new clients, we now climb the Alps to pay the King of Sardinia for defending his own cauſe, though we ourſelves had ſo lately ſlighted it. Our zeal for the concert of Princes, overlooking all recent animoſities, leads us even to diſtant Ruſſia, our treaty with whom, in the midſt of its burleſque, implies a ſerious tyranny over Denmark and Sweden. With the ſame view, we make treaties in Germany for hiring troops; though, if there is a ſpecies of treaty contrary to firſt principles on both ſides, it is that of buying and ſelling human fleſh, without the conſent of the objects of it, and without regard to the merits of the cauſe in which they are to ſhed their blood; and the expence of it is ſtill more to be complained of, if we are to guarantee the paſture grounds in which theſe unfortunate human cattle are fed.

From the firſt moment of the French revolution, Lord Auckland tells us, that it was to be looked upon with an evil eye; and had not the confederates, therefore, been thought certain of ſucceſs without our aid, our war might, perhaps, have

have borne its date from the laſt year. But the battle of Jemappe having reſtored to us this loſt opportunity, Holland, without its own wiſhes, became the prête-nom, to give colour to the quarrel; Europe was ranſacked for allies, from one end to the other; negotiations for peace were diſdained; hazardous meaſures were taken againſt neutral traders to France; and our home diſtreſſes diſregarded, particularly as they gave us many *recruits*, and lowered the pride of the manufacturing intereſt, held to be too prone to democracy. It was not, however, ſo much a ſlaughtered King, as an upſtart republic, erected upon the neighbouring ſhores, which appears to have given this laſt ſtimulant to our politics. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ:* "This way madneſs lies," pomp being unwilling to take its phyſic.

But, had the war been an *ordinary* war, the evils of it would only have been ordinary. But it is of a far other deſcription. In a common war, as ſoon as the parties approach to laſſitude, they think of peace, and reſt harmleſs till the next war, without diſturbing the balance of power. But the preſent war is uſhered in with a concert of Sovereigns, of which the firſt object is every where to cruſh the people, and the firſt conſequence to annihilate the balance of power between nations.—Hence will follow the attempt to ſubjugate all the ſmaller or freer powers (ſometimes by bargains made in the midſt of peace) in order to ſwell the larger and more arbitrary. Poland was thus inſtantly nipped in the bud, for pretending to be free; and France was deſtined to the ſame fate, for the ſame reaſon, but it has proved itſelf a plant of ſturdy growth. England, though boaſting of its freedom, nevertheleſs encourages this univerſal confederacy, in ſpite of the maxim of *divide et impera;* thinking, to all appearance, that there is no danger ſo great as too much liberty. And Hanover,

laſtly,

laſtly, which, ſeven years ago, thought it indiſpenſable to form a league againſt *one* preponderating member in the Germanic body, now cements the union between *two* of them, doubtleſs poſſeſſed of ſome ſelf-protecting or other ſecret, incommunicable to England.—But why England is ſo eager to replant the Bourbon ſtock, with an Auſtrian graft in it, upon the throne of France, and to re-combine the links of this dangerous chain of connection, remains for men wiſer than myſelf to divine. Why alſo we are to divide France, and throw its remnants into the hands of thoſe, who will next wiſh to divide ourſelves, when France is the only great territorial power, with independent principles, which is able to oppoſe them, is another equally deep enigma. Do we think, that the other mighty ſpoilers, with whom we are aſſociated, will hear *us* talk of *indemnity and ſecurity*, without aſking the like for *themſelves*; and that if one pulls out a hair becauſe it is white, another will not be ſeparated becauſe it is black; and thus France ſoon be left bald and bare to the winds of heaven; and reduced to a ſhattered, mangled carcaſe, like another Poland, another Germany, or another Italy, the prey of the firſt comer, who ſhall be permitted by the confederacy to faſten upon it.

But what ſeems to me as ſhocking as any other topic in this war, is the mode propoſed for carrying it on, *per fas et nefas*; by diſſenſions, inſurrections, and diſtreſs; and in which, if *we* are ourſelves backward, foreigners may ſo ſoon make up for the negligence. When I read of the late Congreſs at Antwerp, which cancelled the Prince of Saxe Cobourg's declaration both againſt the partition of France, and in favour of a conſtitutional King; and recollect that it was done under our auſpices, who received with ſuch placidneſs the Duke of Brunſwick's manifeſto, and now talk of dividing France, both in a po-

litical and a territorial ſenſe; I cannot help thinking that we feel ourſelves *in arrears* for the tardineſs of our acceſſion to the confederacy; which brings to my mind thoſe other lines, from the witch ſcenes in Macbeth:

Saucy and bold, how did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth,
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the miſtreſs of your charms,
The cloſe contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part
Or ſhew the glory of our art?
And, which is worſe, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward ſon,
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you.
But make amends now: get you gone,
Round about the caldron go;
In the poiſon'd entrails throw.
Double, double, toil and trouble;
Fire, burn; and caldron bubble,
Like a hell-broth, boil and bubble:
Cool it with a baboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.
Oh well done! I commend your pains,
And every one ſhall ſhare i' the gains.
Black ſpirits and white,
Blue ſpirits and grey,
Mingle, mingle, mingle,
You—that mingle may.

There are many horrors, which lurk under the cover of general words, unſeen even by thoſe who pronounce them, as I ſhall here unfold with reſpect to thoſe of diſſenſion, inſurrection, and diſtreſs.—In order to excite *diſſenſion*, in a direct manner in France, a faction-monger

is

is applied to; who like a poetaſter or play-wright, looks about for the agents and materials for a ſtorm. Alarmers and alarmiſts, irritators and moderators, affirmers and refuters, motion-makers and motion-ſpoilers, mob-leaders and mobs, are ſeverally brought into play, and thus the plot gradually gathers and explodes; which is all attributed to the good people of Paris, while the thread which dances the dreadful puppets, reaches to Vienna or Coblentz, or perhaps to London.—*Inſurrections* are ſtill more dreadful than diſſenſions, becauſe every thing is ſtaked upon them at their very outſet; and innocent men, lovers of their king and religion, are led from their families and peaceful occupations, to take up arms, probably in vain, and then to die in the field, or on the ſcaffold.—As to *diſtreſs*, as long as it reſpects only the loſs of ſuperfluities or fopperies, it is little; but theſe articles alone are ſuffered to paſs*; while corn of all ſorts (the ſtaff of life) of which the want affects the innocent poor, the female, and infant, as alſo cattle, ſtands under a dreadful interdict as to its entry into the ports of France. And mark the conſequence: hunger, which admits of no apologies, attacks the rich of one party or the other, accord-

* It is inſinuated, that there are doubts whether this is to be permitted. If ſo, we are leaving far behind us the old controverſy, whether free bottoms make free goods; for we ſhall make the trade vitiate both ſhips and goods, contrary to all precedent. It is alſo contrary to all policy, for the tyranny of our navy will be remembered by neutral nations to our coſt. If we ſtudied humanity, we ſhould leſſen, inſtead of extending the evils of war; and if we regarded juſtice, we ſhould remember that if the French are enough united in favour of the revolution to render this puniſhment applicable to them as a *nation*, they are enough united to lay claim to the quiet poſſeſſion of their revolution and its fruits.—Does not our preſent conduct reſemble that of certain uncivilized ſtates, and is it not a cruſade upon the waters, againſt the individuals of a nation, inſtead of being ſolely againſt its armed forces?

ing to the local politics of the district; sheds blood, wastes property, frightens away supplies, and ending in a worse provision, than before, disease follows the footsteps of famine and tumult.—Thus worthy are the means of the end: and thus is a war, which even in its *best* view is a war of *metaphysics*, made to destroy the substantial happiness of man.

Observe too here, that the standard for guaging the propriety of continuing the war, is masked under an impenetrable cover; and that the pretexts against the peace are all of the most latitudinarian and self-generating description.—For example, is it time to say, that the French have a stable government? No, reply the faction-mongers and the combined generals; who convulse the country to its centre.—Do you ask, are they yet to be trusted? No, it is replied, for there are still atheists and disorganizers, who publicly talk, and write and govern, (being paid for so doing in various cases by foreign money).—Have we security enough? No, surely, replies every one; not while these things remain.—And then comes indemnity in the rear, ever insatiable, as it presents an ever-increasing bill, and has an appetite which "grows by what it feeds on."

The unfair comparisons made between the politics of the French and those of old governments, provoke a few remarks in this place, on the subject.—If the French only *attempt* conquest, the world is said to be undone by the mere attempt; and when the triumvirate actually *accomplishes* them, they are said no more to relate to us, than if they were made in the moon; nor to give any cause of uneasiness, as to the views entertained by the parties in other cases. The French, it is next said, are levellers, and banish men of worth, and silence men of science, and this again is dreadful: but, if an arbitrary

prince acts upon the principle of levelling the loftier poppy-heads, and if, by a principle of oſtraciſm, he dooms merit to Siberia or the Baſtile, it is ſuppoſed in *his* hands to ceaſe to deſerve criticiſm, for the conciſe reaſon, that it is only *what has always been*. If a Pariſian's carriage is ſtripped of its horſes by the French, the impreſs of the beaſt of burthen of the peaſant in other countries (which is perhaps the peaſant's *little all*) is never ſet againſt it; and the tyranny on the ſide of France is called, unexampled. If the French direct the people of a new conqueſt, to organize themſelves afreſh, the overthrow of all municipal law and of ancient forms is immediately announced; without any recollection, that in one brief proclamation, every thing is changed from one end to the other, by a Ruſſian or Pruſſian conqueror; of which nothing however is ſaid by the ſuffering parties, merely becauſe complaint would only add a new meaſure to their woes.—This uneven diſtribution of cenſure, at the ſame time that it is flagrant, has however, one mitigation; for the French have been ſuch great pretenders to juſtice, that we the more remark their deviations from it. It is like the blot falling upon unſullied paper; or, to put the caſe into the form of a contraſt; while we ſcarcely notice the meretricious or importuning behaviour of a female ſinner by profeſſion, we are revolted at obſerving the want of timidity in a woman of graver pretenſions, and think her character gone, when ſhe attends with intereſt to the gay ſallies and familiarities of a rake.

If we are told (in order to juſtify the preſent proceedings of the confederates) that we may legitimately intrude into a country which is lawleſsly ſacrificing its people and diſturbing its neighbours, in order to ſet it to rights; nothing would be got by a conceſſion of ſuch a principle. For, firſt, let us prove the facts; next, let us make the

application

application of the principle equal, and ſee that the confederates ſacrifice none of *their* people unjuſtly, and ſtill leſs in a war to diſturb their neighbours; and thirdly, let us be ſure that this interference is not mere pretence, and that inſtead of *calming* diſturbances and evil doings, we are not *directly or indirectly, doubling and redoubling them;* and what is ſtill worſe, doing ſo, in order to produce a weakneſs, which may give an external enemy admiſſion into the heart of France.—But if the French are thus ſo dreadful, that from their hands being againſt every one, the hand of every one ought to be againſt them; what are we to ſay to the piratical ſtates of Barbary, whom now and then we have been more than glad to find our friends; or to the American Indians, whoſe manners are ſtill more deſtructive, and who have not the leſs on that account, partaken in our friendſhip, and obtained our acceptance of their ſervices.

But as there is no end to the conſiderations which flow in, I ſhall terminate by a ſhort addreſs to my countrymen.

'You have before you, my friends, the choice of two 'evils.—The one is, the revival of the power of France, 'in the way in which ſhe is likely to do you leſs harm 'than ever; becauſe, by her preſent republican govern-'ment ſhe has loſt all her old family connections.—The 'other evil is, the general union eſtabliſhed among the 'governing powers of the continent. They have pledged 'their forces to form, as it were, a ſort of *bank*, out of 'which each is to draw aſſiſtance, who ſhall happen to 'find his ſubjects troubleſome; and as it is not likely that 'there will be much delicacy uſed towards the people on 'this occaſion, this is to be deemed a confederacy not 'only againſt licentiouſneſs, but againſt liberty; and a 'prince, whoſe own nation from motives of prudence

'ſhall

'ſhall have declared a ſtanding army unconſtitutional and 'dangerous, may eaſily fruſtrate their precaution, by 'obtaining aſſiſtance from the confederacy.—But under 'the cover of the infatuation which produced this union, 'the three ſtrongeſt continental powers have ſuperadded '*another* union, for the purpoſe of conqueſt, which has 'already made a prey of Poland; and they are ſo placed 'as to be able to make their ſtrength ſtill ſtronger out of 'other ſpoils, not only in Europe, but Aſia and Africa; 'to ſay nothing of France, which however is the only 'continental power left to aid us in oppoſing them, in 'caſe of need.—It is not our proper duty to take thought 'for Hanover, though it becomes us to hope, that its 'cloſe underſtanding with the confederated powers will 'better anſwer its purpoſe, both now and hereafter, 'than can by mere reaſoning be ſuppoſed to be probable. 'But let us conſider that Holland, which was led into 'the war by ourſelves, and which therefore in juſtice 'deſerves our attention, I ſay, that Holland may hence 'eaſily be forced to embrace a continental connection, not 'only contrary to its own intereſts, but to ours, eſpecially 'by *Pruſſia;* which will be a moſt ſerious evil, even 'ſhould it eſcape immediate conqueſt.—With reſpect to 'our own ſituation, however ſafe it may ſeem from 'immediate invaſion, we muſt recollect, that we are 'chiefly a naval power, in conſequence of our coaſts; 'but as Europe alſo has coaſts, a combination in Europe 'may ſooner or later furniſh a counter-navy, which ſhall 'render hazardous the ſafety of a country like ours, of 'moderate ſize, and deſtitute of fortifications. The 'ſame general combination of powers may alſo at any 'time affect all our various branches of *continental trade*, 'by its hoſtile edicts. Our Eaſt-Indies likewiſe are no 'more ſafe from Ruſſia, than they would formerly have

'been

'been from Jenghis Khan, or any other of the Eaſtern 'territorial conquerors, who ſhould have been bent upon 'ſubduing them.—Upon comparing therefore the two 'evils offered for our choice, namely France reſtored, or 'the confederacy triumphant; we ſhall find, that while 'the one evil can only occaſionally affect our quiet; the 'other, always muſt threaten our exiſtence, eſpecially if 'a future ſovereign of our country (and ſuch things may 'happen) ſhould at any time borrow aid from the *confe-* 'derates to deſtroy our liberty, after being fatigued with 'the conſtant trouble of defending it againſt them.

'You are told that the partition of Poland does not 'concern you, by men who nevertheleſs know, that the 'Auſtrian dominions reach to our channel, and that the 'Pruſſian dominions extend to Holland; and that what- 'ever Auſtria and Pruſſia obtain by means of Poland, is 'like ſtrength put into their *right* hands, in order to paſs 'it on to their *left*.—They tell you, alſo, that Poland 'formerly has had ſovereigns given to it by force; but 'they do not add, that it was done by comparatively 'weak powers, and who thereby only gained Poland as 'a temporary *ally*; whereas Poland is now incorporated 'as a *property*, in fee ſimple, by great powers, who have 'ſtill larger poſſeſſions before them attainable by the 'ſame infallible means.—Theſe perſons however, have 'added one truth, worth all the reſt; namely, that we 'had but one power to aid in oppoſing this partition, 'which is *France*; France, which is now endeavoured to 'be mutilated and rent aſunder.—As they gravely confeſs 'alſo, that the Popiſh partition was *irreſiſtible*, will they 'next tell us, by what means we are to prevent the too 'certain abſorption of Germany, Turkey, Italy, and the 'North, in due progreſſion, unleſs by the aid of France?

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'We hear much of the neceſſity of precautions and 'ſecurity againſt France being lodged in the hands of 'ſtrangers; but are you not ſick of the fluctuation of 'politics, when it is but a few years ſince we were enthu-'ſiaſts for Maria Thereſa of Auſtria; then became her 'enemy; then renewed the enmity againſt Auſtria under 'the German league; and again at the time of the Ruſſian 'armament; and now forſooth, ſeem about to ſeek to 'ſtrengthen her hands again by barriers and by provinces, 'when ſhe has ſtrengthened her *own* hands by an alliance 'with the whole of Europe, and by acquiſitions which 'though not yet located are not the leſs certain, and 'when to-morrow ſhe may relapſe and be our bittereſt 'foe. In ſhort, when all Europe, is alike given to am-'bition, it is idle to take the trouble of making one the 'ſtake-holder in preference to one another.

'It is not neceſſary in any view, that this war ſhould 'end with an *indemnity*, nor has Mr. Pitt taught us the 'policy of it, by his own conduct; for you had no in-'indemnity for his armament for Holland, for Nootka-'Sound, or for Oczakow; being made contented in 'every one of theſe caſes, with the generous ſentiment, 'of the *good* you had done, without inquiring into 'the origin of the quarrel, in order to fix who had been 'moſt in fault, or who had firſt begun it.—It is not 'therefore out of rule, to end hoſtile aims without 'delay, when there is an end of the conteſt which has 'provoked them.

'As to the wiſdom of our ſeeking conqueſt, even 'were conqueſt certain, what more is neceſſary to us, 'after we have attained a magnitude of empire ſuf-'ficient to enſure our own ſafety; unleſs we wiſh to 'draw upon ourſelves the ſame jealouſy, which at 'tracted ſo many enemies to us, during the American

'war; or wiſh to force other nations into new re-
'ſources to countervail the influence of ours; or
'to hazard the ſame internal evils, which have ruined
'other ſtates when they have had too much proſperity,
'and have over-built their native baſes. All that is
'wanting to us, at preſent, ſeems to be the continuance
'of a good domeſtic government, and a *ſeparation of*
'*intereſts* prevailing among the continental powers, (in
'the place of their preſent union,) ſo as permanently
'to ſecure a balance of power.

'I do not touch upon the burthens of the war, eſpe-
'cially of a *land* war, with allies in our pay, becauſe you
'know and feel them; and you will know and feel them
'more; for every war has not only taxes to impoſe during
'its progreſs, but leaves a *legacy* of them after its cloſe.
'But remember, that war infeſts communications by
'ſea and land, produces a tendency to private œconomy,
'waſtes people and productions, and diſheartens enter-
'prize, not only with you, but with every nation mixing
'in or ſuffering by the war; and that the war has now
'nearly embraced the whole of Europe, and thus has formed
'extenſive impediments to trade. Sir William Temple
'gives a ſtriking inſtance of the influence of war upon
'induſtry, in the caſe of the corn trade; and what more
'important to us and to the human race, than to pre-
'vent dearth, (the parent of diſcontent,) at a period ſaid
'to be diſpoſed to revolutions?

'If our Miniſters will not think juſtly for us, we
'muſt reaſon a little for ourſelves. A little confidence
'towards them is indeed uſeful; but nothing is more
'dangerous than its *exceſs*, becauſe it not only permits,
'but encourages miſconduct; which never can be more
'impolitic, than when every thing may be at ſtake.

'—Can

'—Can you ſee then, let me aſk, any reaſon for concealing our ultimatum, when no object *can* be ſo preſſing to us as terminating the war, and nothing ſo dangerous as our Miniſters having a falſe object in ſuch a criſis as the preſent.—They tell you indeed, that they wiſh not to deceive you, by ſuffering you to think, that the war will ſoon be at an end; (a delicacy, which is perhaps deſigned to atone for the ruin brought upon ſo many of you, who believed in the official aſſurances conſtantly and even lately given you, that the war itſelf was improbable, and that there was in any event no deſign of meddling in the interior affairs of France.) But let them, then, miſlead neither you on one ſide, nor foreign powers on the other, by concealing any longer from you the terms in meditation for peace.—Are they afraid of announcing the nature of the peace, leſt it ſhould betray the nature of the war?—If it be ſaid, in order to ſooth you, that miniſters only talk largely, to hide the real approaching cloſe of the war; or to induce the French to reſort to better order, as the price of peace; or that in other reſpects they are ſure of their grounds; I reply that a little practice teaches us, that nothing is to be left to conjecture, or refinements in great affairs. We muſt therefore conſider miniſters as ſerious in their declarations; and *remonſtrate* with them no leſs ſeriouſly; eſpecially, as it will be the beſt means of inclining the other powers to peace, when they ſee that they cannot expect aid much longer from this nation.

'As to the French, if a republic is really their humour, let them have it. Never did Mr. Fox ſhew more wiſdom or firmneſs, than in propoſing to recogniſe it; his reaſons being, as we find, *much deeper*, than the

'the mere momentary purchaſe of an accommodation.
'—Nothing is more evident, than that France was
'once inclined to join us in inculcating *peace* upon
'all the world, and that ſhe is now inclined to reſiſt
'the *continental confederacy*: and can we wiſh for any
'thing more? Torn, as ſhe is, with convulſions, her
'deſire is ſtill to ſurvive as France, and as the child of
'liberty. Had foreigners at no time interfered, her
'wounds would ſoon probably have healed, in the
'language of medical men, by virtue of the firſt in-
'tention: and the mode of ſtill healing them is, in-
'ſtead of throwing into them cauſtics and irritants,
'to leave them to themſelves, and to the *vis medicatrix*
'*naturæ*. When the enemy ſhall quit their frontier,
'and no longer divert their attention and require ſtrong
'meaſures; the will of France muſt prevail over its
'factions, and that will, I truſt, is good, or with time
'may become ſo; but if not, it is *then* that we muſt
'have recourſe to principles of extermination. And
'provided it is to fight againſt liberty and ſtill more
'againſt licentiouſneſs, never let us fear the want of
'a concurrence for this purpoſe among all the arbitrary
'powers by whom Europe too unhappily is governed.'

—But I here drop my pen; and may it be for ever; and while men of a different temper might look for an approval of their labours, all that I have to aſk in return for them, is a peaceful obſcurity.

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTERS

LETTERS

ON THE

CONCERT OF PRINCES.

On the Abandonment of Poland by Pruſſia.—Publiſhed July 20, 1792.

To the PRINTER *of the* MORNING CHRONICLE.

SIR,

IT gave me pleaſure and pain intermixed, to ſee the treaty of alliance, and the correſpondence between the Kings of Pruſſia and Poland, inſerted in your paper of the 12th inſtant. The dereliction of Poland is both a diſgrace and an affliction to human nature; but when Princes abandon their engagements, they deſerve every expoſure.

The motives of Pruſſia with reſpect to Poland, have been too clear to be miſinterpreted. While ſhe was jealous of the progreſs of Auſtria and Ruſſia againſt the Turks, or while ſhe hoped for the voluntary ceſſion of Dantzic and Thorn from Poland, Poland was to be ſupported; but when the fear of Auſtria and Ruſſia ſubſided, and Poland refuſed to commit ſuicide, the moſt ſolemn treaties become annulled, and Poland muſt expiate its guilt by a ſecond diſmemberment.

Perhaps hiſtory does not furniſh a greater inſtance of political deluſion, than is at preſent exhibited by Pruſſia. —Ruſſia has already above four times as many inhabitants, and Auſtria three times as many, as Pruſſia; and each of theſe powers either poſſeſſes, or is likely to acquire, new tracts of territory, ſufficient to enable them to double their preſent numbers, beſides a proſpect of enjoying conſiderable increaſed advantages as to trade, navigation, and wealth.—On the other hand, as the reſources of Pruſſia, both preſent and future, are peculiarly limited both as to extent and poſition, the loſs of the *barrier* formed by Poland againſt theſe formidable powers, cannot be compenſated by any temporary acquiſition of *booty;* ſince one third of the Poliſh ſpoils in the hands of Pruſſia, can be no equipoiſe to two thirds of them in the hands of theſe rivals, if they act in concert.

As to the permanent feelings of Auſtria, they are eaſily divined; for, if ſhe is eager at this diſtant æra, to ſnatch back Lorrain, Alſace, &c. from France; there will be ſtill leſs doubt, from this example, of her inclinations to recover Sileſia, torn from her more recently, by a ſmaller power, nearer home; inclinations which will ſurvive all temporary accommodations made for intereſted purpoſes.—But Auſtria is liable to ſtill more extenſive and dangerous paſſions, founded upon the influence of names, and the pride of all perſons, not to be inferior to thoſe who have gone before them in the ſame career. The geographic name of Germany, and the title of Emperor, will perpetually excite a recollection of the power of the *Weſtern* Emperors of Rome; and lead to wiſhes which will include Pruſſia, Holland, Holſtein, Switzerland, and Savoy, as their immediate object; and finally extend to Italy, in order to render the whole of

that

that rich peninſula, a family poſſeſſion to the Houſe of Auſtria.—The plunder of Turkey and Perſia, and the well-known anxiety of Ruſſia to have a *Greek* empire, (as well as a Greek church) will naturally diſpoſe Ruſſia to keep well with Auſtria, as being the ſtrongeſt and moſt contiguous power.—But without any certainty of ſuch an union between theſe powers, it is ſufficient to affirm that there is a *danger* of it; and that, if once it takes place, it muſt naturally be at the expence of Pruſſia, whoſe upſtart name not only disfigures the map of Germany, but whoſe troubleſome pretenſions, and whoſe reſtleſs jealouſies (the latter of which are the certain companions of its weakneſs) at preſent require that Auſtria and Ruſſia ſhould divide the plunder of that quarter of the world, which by its ſituation ſeems ſo peculiarly their *own*, into *three* ſhares, inſtead of *two*.

What faith is it that Pruſſia, in this caſe, will have to place in the engagements of her rivals?—Is it by her own conduct to Poland and to Saxony, that ſhe hopes to render a ſyſtem of truth and honour reſpected? Or does her own verſatility, who from having been yeſterday the enemy of Auſtria and Ruſſia, is now become their aſſociate, inſpire her with confidence? Or is it, again, from the example of Sweden towards France and Turkey, or from that of Holland towards England and France, or from that of Ruſſia towards Turkey, or from the little veneration of the French emigrants for their civic oath, or from any other events in the book of hiſtory, that Pruſſia learns that there is any ſafety in politics, beſides that of not placing herſelf in the *power* of others?—Pruſſia thinks that ſhe has acted with much addreſs in producing the war between Auſtria and France, of which, however, at preſent, ſhe ſeems likely to bear

nearly an equal ſhare. But, alas! Auſtria will only purſue this war, while ſhe thinks to gain by it, and will endeavour to be the firſt, if neceſſary, in making a treaty of alliance with France; and will make her ſucceſs in doing this an atonement for having engaged in a vain and fooliſh enterprize. And in the mean time, if the fleeting ſyſtem of the Concert of Princes in general, ends in a permanent concert between Auſtria and Ruſſia in particular, it portends a ſpeedy extinction of Pruſſia. —The cauſe of the Concert of Princes, it is to be remarked, was not merely an attachment in Auſtria to the Royal Family of France, but her perſuaſion that her alliance with France depended on its continuance in power. The operation of this treaty was, indeed, ſuſpended on the reſtoration of the French King to liberty; but Leopold having been prevailed upon afterwards to hazard ſome menances againſt the French, it produced in France a diſcuſſion and reprobation of the Auſtrian alliance on the terms eſtabliſhed in 1756. From *that moment*, Auſtria became hoſtile to the National Aſſembly; and therefore that Aſſembly well knows on what terms it can reſtore peace, ſhould a compromiſe become needful.—Pruſſia, therefore, is like one of thoſe weak animals in the fable, who were proud of hunting with the lords of the foreſt, but who when the game was taken, ſoon diſcovered the nature of the lion's ſhare.— Auſtria and Ruſſia are of a ſize to be always impregnable, even in ſpite of bad government: but bounded and artificial ſtates, like Pruſſia, can only be ſecure, when there are many other ſtates jealous of the larger ones, with which it can ally itſelf. A ſtate, whoſe chief ſtrength depends upon an army, and upon a treaſure moſt ridiculouſly magnified, only requires a laviſh Prince,

and

and a fooliſh choice of generals, or extravagant projects, to overthrow it beyond redemption.

But to return to Poland. It was ſurely a little unreaſonable in Pruſſia to expect Poland to renounce its chief acceſs to the ſea, and put its great imports and exports into its power, without any compenſation.

That it is unjuſt to invade the rights of the Nation and the King of Poland, is ſelf-evident. States are families, and one family muſt not wantonly interfere with another.—If Poland had been an orderly country, reduced by its revolution to anarchy; if her King had rendered himſelf a deſpot, or had even been odious or weak, ſome colour might have been preſerved. But when a kingdom, known to a proverb for its bad government and diſtractions, unites for the purpoſe of adopting a government applauded by Europe, through the medium of a revolution the beſt digeſted and conducted of any known in hiſtory; and when a King, allowed by the Pruſſian Miniſter to be "*virtuous*," provides himſelf a ſucceſſor (not out of his own, but out of another family) whom the Pruſſian Monarch proclaims to be alike "*virtuous, as well as deſtined to form the happineſs of "Poland;*" when, I ſay, under *theſe* circumſtances, Pruſſia combines againſt Poland, in order again to profit by its ſpoils, we ſee a conduct more revolting than any which Pruſſia can attribute to the Jacobins of France, againſt whom its arms are now pretended to be directed.

But Pruſſia acts not only againſt her intereſt, and againſt juſtice, but againſt her peremptory engagements. Look at the ſixth Article of the *recent* Treaty with Poland. It will there appear that an oppoſition to foreign interference in the internal affairs of Poland, is diſtinctly undertaken by Pruſſia, with a view to Ruſſia; and that

this article of the Treaty is ſo peculiarly fitted to the predicament of Poland ſingly, that it is not even thought of being made *reciprocal* in favour of Pruſſia.—And what is the pretext for abandoning this Treaty? It is, that the *Empreſs of Ruſſia has ſhewn a decided oppoſition to the order of things eſtabliſhed in Poland on May* 3, 1791, *and is provoked by Poland preſuming to put herſelf into a poſture of defence to ſupport it.*—It will be ſeen however, by the annexed documents, that nothing was effected on the 3d of May 1791, to which Pruſſia had not previouſly aſſented, and which ſhe did not afterwards ſanction; and that Pruſſia, according to the aſſertion of her own King, did not intimate a ſingle doubt reſpecting the Revolution, till one month (and according to the Pruſſian Miniſter, till ſix months) after it had taken place; in ſhort, to uſe the Monarch's own words, as fully explanatory of his double politics, "not till the "*general tranquillity of Europe* permitted him to explain "himſelf."——Inſtead, therefore, of aſſiſting Poland, Pruſſia inſultingly recommends to Poland to retrace her ſteps; in which caſe, ſhe *ſays*, that ſhe will be ready to *attempt* an *accommodation* in her favour.—Is it thus, then, that treaties and the happineſs of nations are ſported with? Has not Poland already done ſervice under this very Treaty, by omitting to ſeek an alliance with Ruſſia and Auſtria, and by attaching herſelf to Pruſſia, when Pruſſia wanted every weight to help her to ſave the Turks? Has Pruſſia done any permanent counter-ſervice? On the contrary, is not the whole of the war between Poland and Ruſſia, with all its conſequences, to be placed to her account?—Was there any article in the treaty to prevent Poland changing her Conſtitution; or any article to limit the aid of Pruſſia to the late preciſe form of that conſtitution? On the contrary, is not the

protection

protection of Poland, from foreign interference in her internal affairs, an avowed *caſus fœderis;* being the ſubject of one entire article of the treaty, rendered ſtill ſtronger, by the covenant being *wholly* confined to the benefit of Poland? How ſtrange would be the doctrine, that, becauſe one nation forms an alliance with another, it is not, therefore *ſui juris* in its own concerns; eſpecially when it is at the ſame time univerſally admitted, that the contracting parties may form ſubſequent alliances with *other foreign powers*, which in the event, may frequently militate with the prior engagements?

It is natural to ſuppoſe, that the conduct of *Pruſſia* has been in part inſtigated by the fear of Poland's reſuming, at a future period, the territory loſt at its *firſt* ſpoliation.—But Poland was capable of entering into a generous compromiſe as to this object, as far as reſpected Pruſſia; the obſervance of which, the poſition of Pruſſia inſured, in conſequence of its interſecting the communication between Saxony and Poland; and it is to be remarked, in general, that this poſition muſt always have given Pruſſia weight in the affairs of Europe, as long as Poland and Saxony had remained connected. Beſides, it is clear, that Pruſſia, by a treaty with Poland and Saxony, on the one ſide, and by the aid of the Germanic league, and alſo of a treaty with France and Denmark, joined to her old allies in Great-Britain and Holland, on the other, might have given permanent tranquillity to Europe, and a peculiar ſtability to her own ſyſtems.—Inſtead of it, ſhe has plunged herſelf into a wide ſcene of dangers, in the idle hope that Auſtria does not comprehend her little politics, and will not be able with

prudence to ſave herſelf the *ſooneſt*, ſhould occaſion require it.

But paſſing by Pruſſia, let us conſider a little, the proceedings on the part of *Ruſſia*. However favourable may be the light in which I would wiſh to place the aſcent of the Empreſs to the Ruſſian throne, to the prejudice of her huſband and her ſon, yet it is impoſſible that ſhe can urge (as a foreigner) any legitimate foundation for it, except the conſent of the Ruſſian nation. Will it not then towards her be a ſufficient juſtification of the Poliſh conſtitution, to ſay, that it was firſt voted, and is ſince adored by the Poliſh nation; and that not only its *King* propoſed it, but that there is in Poland no *hereditary* ſucceſſor to the throne, as in France, who can offer any objections to it.—If foreign applauſe, on which the Empreſs herſelf has greatly reſted, is requiſite to ratify it, what civilized nation, what party, what author, I had almoſt ſaid, what Prince, throughout Europe, has not felt for it a ſincere admiration, and does not follow it with his ſecret prayers? With Engliſhmen and Foreigners in general, I will venture to affirm, that there is not *one* exception to this; unleſs among perſons intereſted in the league formed for its deſtruction.—"And "will *you* then, great Catharine, you, who already poſ- "ſeſs far more of the globe than any other power upon "the face of it; will you ſpoil this fair work of human "hands? will you, a lover of ſcience, replunge a large "diſtrict of the earth into the cruel barbariſm, in which "it has been held by means of its government for cen- "turies, not omitting the period when you preſided "over it? and will you fruſtrate that *independence*, which "may ſave Poland from falling into the hands of an "enemy in future times?—Your power is certain; but "deſpotiſm and injuſtice, whatever may be the fate of "democratic

" democratic principles, cannot now obtain the eſteem,
" or the praiſe of an European public. Your guarantee
" of the former Poliſh Conſtitution, can only ſerve as
" a reaſon for preventing the preſent conſtitution from
" being changed for a *worſe*, and not againſt the in-
" troduction of a *better* in its place.—Be known then,
" by the good you do, and not by the evil: ſeek for
" the bleſſings of mankind, and not for their curſes.
" It is eaſy for the ſtrong to add to their ſtrength;
" but it is not given to every one to ſhew magnanimous
" forbearance. Beſides, the term of nature (to which,
" alas! you know the proudeſt of us muſt ſubmit)
" does not promiſe you many years longer for the rule
" of human affairs; and you are in a great meaſure
" ignorant of the characters of thoſe who are to come
" after you, to conduct your various ſyſtems and do-
" minions: perhaps too theſe may be uſurpers, inſtead
" of your own iſſue.—But if your plans of *conqueſt* are
" irrevocable, at leaſt inſure to Poland a *good government*.
" In an age, when it is ſaid that Princes are to be ſup-
" ported, if the King of *Poland only* is oppreſſed, it will
" be thought that he found no favour from his fellow-
" ſovereigns, only becauſe he was ſuppoſed the moſt
" amiable among them.—Time, on account of this
" Prince's age, muſt ſoon remove him in order to
" make way for a ſucceſſor, who, by the Poliſh laws,
" muſt be found out of his family. Let the Poliſh
" government then remain, as now projected, even if
" you ſeek to change the intended line of deſcent of the
" crown.—The alterations of the conſtitution are of
" ſuch a happy nature, being at once favourable to the
" nation and to its Prince, that the King of Poland
" has performed herein an acceptable ſervice for *every*
" *Sovereign* who ſhall ſucceed him in that country.—

" Be

" Be the reſtorer, then of kingdoms, but not their
" confounder.—Let the ſtigma of your late manifeſto
" be wiped away as ſpeedy as poſſible from the memory
" of the public, where the ſhock it has given to your
" reputation is beyond your means of comprehending
" it, becauſe none can poſſibly dare to tell it to you.—
" Be aſſured, great Princeſs, that while the applauſe
" of men is worth receiving, it is neceſſary that they
" ſhould be *civilized*; and when they are civilized,
" it is impoſſible, whatever they may write or ſay in
" public, that they can ever *think* or *ſay* in private,
" that Princes are not bound to promote the happineſs
" of our race in uniſon with their own. I will go fur-
" ther, and affirm, that Princes will always in reality, be
" deemed ſecondary characters, and that nations will
" always be held the principals; and that thoſe Sove-
" reigns who cannot, upon occaſion, perſonally ſacrifice
" themſelves to the people depending upon them, or
" for their ſakes reſtrain a weak ambition within proper
" bounds, are wholly unworthy of their ſtations. As
" the power of Princes cannot ſurvive the grave, the
" mighty Monarch, when dead, leaves behind him a
" republic in the living; the page of hiſtory becomes
" his tribunal; there are none ſo humble, as not to
" find defenders at it; and a ſingle ſentence founded in
" truth, in the preſent enlightened times, is ſufficient
" to lay proſtrate the proudeſt character, if really un-
" worthy of fame. The reaſon is evident—it is, that
" men are impartial to the dead, who excite neither
" their fears nor their hopes. Hence it is that the
" venal pen is found an inſufficient protection even to
" the fame of Peter the Great, as he is called, though
" enſhrined by Voltaire; the world having *lately* be-
" come inſtructed as to his manners, before concealed

" from them by the obſcurity in which Ruſſia and its " concerns ſo long lay buried."

As to *Auſtria*, who has forfeited no particular faith upon this occaſion, I ſhall no farther obſerve upon her conduct, than to notice how little *family* connection among Princes is to be depended upon, when the Saxon family is ſlighted by Auſtria; and as to the ſmall reſpect of Princes for *perſonal* worth, it is alike ſeen in the little deference ſhewn both to the Saxon Elector and the Poliſh Monarch upon this occaſion.—In what have the Jacobins of France done worſe, than the Triumvirate to which Poland and Saxony are ſacrificed? Does not every thing ſeem to prove, that whether abſolute power is in the hands of one, of three, or of many, it is ſure to be abuſed?

In another letter I ſhall ſpeak of the *Concert of Princes*, and its conſequences, particularly on account of the growing power of Auſtria and Ruſſia. In the mean time, the following pieces will amply confirm the aſſertions here made reſpecting Pruſſia.

July 16, 1792.

A CALM OBSERVER.

Documents referred to in the preceding Letter.

ARTICLE VI. OF THE TREATY OF DEFENSIVE ALLIANCE BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY THE KING AND THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND, AND HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF PRUSSIA; DATED MARCH 29, 1790.

If any foreign power whatever, ſhall by virtue of any preceding acts or ſtipulations, or any interpretation of them, aſſume the right of interfering in the internal affairs

ſairs of the Republic of *Poland*, or its dependencies, at any time, or in any manner; his Majeſty the King of *Pruſſia* will firſt employ his moſt efficacious good offices to prevent hoſtilities ariſing out of ſuch a pretenſion;—but if all his good offices ſhould fail of effect, and hoſtilities againſt *Poland* ſhould be the conſequence, his Majeſty the King of Pruſſia, conſidering *this* as a caſe, falling within the meaning of the alliance, will aſſiſt the Republic according to the tenour of the IVth Article of the preſent treaty.

COPY OF A LETTER OF THE MARQUIS OF LUCCHESINI, THE PRUSSIAN MINISTER AT WARSAW, TO THE ABBE' P. DATED 26TH MAY 1792.

SIR,

I am very thankful for the care you have taken to procure me a tranſlation of the Speech of the King of Poland. I knew that it reſpected Pruſſia and its alliance. The ſentiments of his Poliſh Majeſty have ſince been announced to me officially in writing, by Count Chreptowicz. After the ſteps I took on the 4th of May laſt and the following days, which were alſo official, as well as conſiſtent with our declarations for *ſix months* paſt, I expected (for why ſhould I conceal it, my dear Abbe) a *turn* leſs oppoſed to the principles, which we have announced to the Diet, reſpecting the conſequences of the Revolution of the 3d of May 1791.

As to the *work* which you attribute to me, I aſſure you that *that* would not have occaſioned a war to Poland.—With reſpect to every thing beſides, which the Court of Berlin learned only in common with ſtrangers and enemies, it was eaſy to foreſee the embarraſſments and dangers to which it would expoſe the Poliſh nation. On this point, I have never had but one opinion, which I have never concealed from my friends. Faithful to my principles, I will never omit any thing reſpecting other objects which may be beneficial to a courageous nation and a *virtuous* King.

EXTRACTS FROM THE ANSWER TO THE ABOVE LETTER, DATED 28TH MAY 1792, BY THE ABBE' P.

The territory of Poland is violated. A neighbouring power comes in arms to diſturb the operations of our Diet. This is the caſe provided for in the 6th Article in the Treaty.—This is virtually what the note of Count Chreptowicz tells you; and whatever *turn* might have been given to it, it could in ſubſtance have told you nothing elſe. There is then nothing oppoſed to the principles which you have recently renounced; for you have never ſaid to us, your Ally, that our frontiers would be attacked; and that you, our powerful friend, would ſee it with indifference, or feel diſpenſed from your engagements.—As to what I call *your work*, and which Poland is happy in owing to you, it is preciſely that which brings the war upon us. The declaration of the Ruſſian Envoy is a proof of this, which cannot be anſwered. It is there you ſee *every one* of the reſolutions of this Republic, your Ally, ſince the commencement of the actual Diet, brought as charges againſt us.—Call to mind the periods, and you will agree that the Act of the 3d of May 1791, is but the reſult of it; or to ſpeak more correctly, *a combination of the ſeveral preceding ſteps*, in which you may call yourſelf the great mover: *pars magna fui.*

The *fundamental articles* of the New Conſtitution were adopted under *your auſpices*; and it was through you, that the Court of Berlin teſtified its approbation, at the cloſe of 1789. The choice of the Elector of Saxony to the throne of Poland, during the life of our preſent King (in which all the Palatinates were unanimous) was alike applauded. The election of dynaſties, or families to the throne, was diſtinctly propoſed in the great project of reform laid before the States by the deputation on the 4th of Auguſt 1790, and became the expreſs ſubject of deliberation.—If the greatneſs of the undertaking, if the aim of the nation ſo long fruſtrated, if political circumſtances, ſuggeſted the meaſure of decreeing theſe articles in an abridged form and reduced to its eſſential points, it is not the leſs true, that all this was done upon avowed principles, and by right of our *independence*, which was aſſuredly your work.—The manner in which the King

your

your maſter condeſcended through Mr. Goltz, on the 8th of May 1791, to anſwer to our communication of the proceedings of the 3d of May of that year, was far from expreſſing, that theſe proceedings were of a nature at all novel to his Majeſty. If you have ever forgot the tenure of that letter, you will find a copy of it annexed.

EXTRACT FROM A DISPATCH FROM THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO COUNT GOLTZ, THEN CHARGE' DES AFFAIRES AT WARSAW.

I received your diſpatch of the 3d of May 1791, with its accompanyment; and I have learned by *the laſt*, the important news, that the Diet of Poland has juſt choſen and proclaimed the Elector of Saxony, as the eventual ſucceſſor to the Throne of Poland; and that it has aſſured the ſucceſſion to his *deſcendants*; and in default of theſe, to the Princeſs, his daughter, and ſuch future huſband, as the Elector of Saxony and the States ſhall fix upon.—After the lively intereſt which I have *always* taken in the happineſs of the Republic, and the *confirmation* of her *new Conſtitution* (an intereſt, of which I have *never ceaſed* to give ſuch convincing proofs as depended *on me*); I perfectly applaud the *deciſive* ſtep which the nation has juſt taken, and which I regard as *infinitely* ſuited to the *conſolidation* of its happineſs.—The news is the more agreeable to me, as I am attached by bonds of friendſhip to the VIRTUOUS Prince, *deſtined to form the happineſs of Poland*, as is alſo the Houſe of Saxony to my Houſe by thoſe of good neighbourhood, and of the moſt happy union. I am thence perſuaded, that the choice of the Republic will confirm *for ever*, the happy and cloſe *intelligence*, which has ſubſiſted to *the preſent moment* between the Republic and myſelf; and I charge you to teſtify in the *moſt expreſſive manner*, my moſt ſincere ſolicitations to the *King*, to the Marſhals of the Diet, and to *all thoſe* who have contributed to this *great work*.

LETTER OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO THE KING OF POLAND.

SIR, MY BROTHER,

I have received, nearly at the ſame moment, the two letters, by which your Majeſty is pleaſed to make known

to

to me the important reſolution juſt taken by the confederated Diet of Poland, for fixing the hereditary ſucceſſion of the throne in favour of the *Houſe of Saxony*.—No one has certainly a better title to communicate to me the particulars of this event, than General Count Potocki, who has acted in it ſo intereſting a part, and who merits in every reſpect the honourable teſtimony which your Majeſty bears in his favour.

The *eagerneſs* I have ſhewn to declare my ſentiments on this ſubject, will convince your Majeſty and the whole Poliſh nation, of the intereſt I take in this meaſure. I am happy to have been able *to contribute to the ſupport of the liberty and independence of Poland*, and one of my moſt pleaſing cares ſhall be to maintain and ſtrengthen the ties which unite us.—I cannot but in particular applaud the choice made of a prince whoſe virtues render him ſo worthy of the throne which awaits him. I hope, however, that that moment is ſtill diſtant, and that your Majeſty will, for a long ſeries of years, conſtitute the happineſs of your people. Theſe wiſhes are not leſs ſincere than is the attachment which I have profeſſed, and with which I ſhall ever remain,

Sir, my Brother,

Your Majeſty's good Brother,

FREDERICK-WILLIAM.

BERLIN, *May* 23, 1791.

LETTER OF THE KING OF PRUSSIA TO THE KING OF POLAND.

BERLIN, *June* 8, 1792.

SIR, MY BROTHER,

The Grand Marſhal of Lithuania, the Comte de Potocki, has delivered to me your Majeſty's letter, dated the 31ſt of May. I there ſee with regret the embarraſſment in which Poland finds itſelf now involved. But I will acknowledge with equal frankneſs, that after all that has paſſed for the laſt *twelve* months, theſe embarraſſments were to be *foreſeen*. Your Majeſty will recollect, that on more than one occaſion, the Marquis de

Luccheſini

Luccheſini was charged to manifeſt not only to you, but to the preponderating Members of the Government, my juſt apprehenſions on this ſubject. From the moment that *the general re-eſtabliſhment of tranquillity in Europe permitted me to explain myſelf*, and that the *Empreſs of Ruſſia* had ſhewn a decided oppoſition to the order of things eſtabliſhed on the 3d of May 1791, my way of thinking, and the language of my Miniſters have *never varied;* and in obſerving with a tranquil eye the new Conſtitution, which the Republic has given to itſelf without my privity or concurrence, I have never had the idea either of ſupporting or protecting it. I have predicted, on the contrary, that the threatening meaſures and the warlike preparations which the Diet unceaſingly deliberated upon one after another, would infallibly provoke the reſentment of the Empreſs of Ruſſia, and draw upon Poland the evils which they were undertaken to avoid.—The event fully ſatisfied thoſe appearances, and one cannot diſſemble in the preſent moment, that *without the new form of Government for the Republic, and without the efforts which they have announced for ſupporting it*, the Court of Ruſſia, would not have determined on the vigorous proceedings ſhe has now embraced.

Whatever be the friendſhip that I have *ſworn* to your Majeſty, and the intereſt I take in every thing that concerns you, you will yourſelf believe that the ſtate of things being *entirely changed ſince the alliance that I contracted* with the Republic; and the preſent conjuncture, brought on by the Conſtitution of the 3d of May 1791, poſterior to my treaty, *not being applicable* to the engagements therein ſtipulated; it does not belong to me to reſiſt the attack made on your Majeſty, if the intentions of the patriotic party are ſtill the ſame, and if they perſiſt in the deſire of maintaining their *own* work;—but if *retracing their ſteps*, they ſhall conſider the difficulties that are ariſing upon all ſides, I ſhall be ready to *concert* meaſures with her Majeſty the Empreſs of Ruſſia, and to explain myſelf, at the ſame time, with the Court of Vienna, to ſtrive to reconcile the different intereſts, and to agree on meaſures capable of reſtoring to Poland its *tranquillity*.

I flatter

I flatter myſelf that your Majeſty will find in theſe diſpoſitions, and in theſe aſſurances, the ſentiments of *ſincere friendſhip, and of the conſideration with which I am,*

Your Majeſty's good *Brother,*

FREDERICK-WILLIAM.

LETTER II.

ON THE CONCERT OF PRINCES.

Publiſhed July 25, 1792.

PART I.

SIR,

ONE of the ableſt and beſt informed ſtateſmen which this country ever produced, the noble author of the American Peace, deprecated lately in Parliament, all ſupport of the "preſent military combination of Princes," even before we had ſeen it in overt-act.—Having in a former Letter in ſome meaſure touched upon this ſubject as it reſpects Poland, I ſhall *now* view it as it reſpects France, Germany, and ourſelves, and ultimately, every thing which can intereſt the human race; I ſhall *next* ſhew, that it is pregnant with miſchief even to the contracting parties themſelves; and *laſtly*, ſpeak of the means which remain for oppoſing it.

The liberties of man, and conſequently the progreſs of ſcience, of civilization, and the arts, have already enough to contend with in every ſtate, viewed *ſeparately*. Whenever the powers inveſted in government for uſeful purpoſes, become abuſed to ambitious ones, in vain do individuals ſeek to reſiſt a great collective force inſtituted by themſelves. Deſpair ſometimes produces a counter-union of the ſubjects, but as it commonly ends in an alteration of rulers, rather than of principles, the evil

complained of ſoon recurs. Hence there are few good governments in the world; ſo few, that our own nation thinks itſelf in poſſeſſion of the only one; and even this has required more than one ſucceſsful revolution to produce, or to preſerve its perfection. Such then, is the ſtate of every ſingle country, even when the domeſtic enemy to its happineſs has none, except the forces of his own nation, at his diſpoſal.—But a new ſcene at the preſent moment opens itſelf. Several Princes have agreed mutually to lend to one another the powers reſpectively intruſted to them for national objects, in order that each may thence be enabled to enforce his reſpective pleaſure upon his reſpective people. In other words, they engage to bring the military forces and the revenues of *all* nations, to act, when requiſite, upon the *people* of any *ſingle* nation; although that people has already enough to ſtruggle with at home, whenever its own public force is applied to ſupport tyranny. As a counter-concert among the *people* of *different* nations is impoſſible, it is henceforth then intended, that Princes ſhall legiſlate at their own diſcretion; and that no nation ſhall ever be able to right its own wrongs; the example of Poland even proving, that when a *prince* is diſpoſed to concur with his own people in improving the Conſtitution of the nation, permiſſion is to be denied even for a meaſure of *mutual* happineſs.—Each nation is, therefore, to be conſidered as deſigned to be governed by an enemy *within*, and an enemy *without*; and every order in ſociety, whether civil or religious, is to vaniſh before an union of military deſpotiſm.

Terrible as is this evil, it has led to one ſtill greater, becauſe more active, and having deeper conſequences; I mean the re-union of ſeveral Princes for the *ſubjugation of the reſt*.—Each evil, however, is founded upon the

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ſame common principle, namely, a military combination. In the one caſe, many Princes join from fear and a common intereſt, for domeſtic purpoſes; in the other, a few of the more potent league from a direct ambition for foreign conqueſts. In the one caſe, war is made againſt the people only; in the other, againſt both people and princes. In the one caſe, the object may be negative; but in the other, it is clearly poſitive.—Events, perhaps, originally ſuggeſted only the firſt ſpecies of league to Auſtria and Pruſſia; but Ruſſia has now joined with them in forming the ſecond ſpecies;—for it cannot be ſuppoſed, that Auſtria and Pruſſia would lead their forces ſix hundred miles from home againſt France, with the *confeſſed* knowledge of the Ruſſian enterprize meditated againſt Poland, unleſs theſe three powers were in a *previous* and *perfect* underſtanding with each other, and embarked in a regular ſyſtem.—An attack, however, upon Poland on one ſide, and France on the other, renders the ſubject of infinite importance to Great-Britain; ſince ſucceſs may ripen the views of the parties into farther projects, not only dangerous to our tranquillity and commerce, but even to our *exiſtence*.

In the time of the Greeks, Alexander became maſter of ſo much of the world as had then figured in hiſtory; and the Romans afterwards nearly conquered all of it, which was known even to their geographers. But the preſent age is open to a ſtill more univerſal domination; every ſingle region of the globe being now diſcovered, and every quarter of the globe being within the power of Europe; ſo that it only remains to obtain the *aſcendancy in Europe*.—As the ruin of Rome was accompliſhed by a triumvirate; ſo Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia, taking advantage of the momentary prejudices of Europe againſt France, are formed at preſent into a triumvirate, infinitely

more formidable than thoſe of the two Cæſars; poſſeſſing among them forces the beſt diſciplined and the moſt numerous in the world; together with dominions protected from all attack, either by means of ſituation or by contiguity; and a population of near ſixty millions of ſouls, which almoſt equals *half the population of Europe*; the whole maſs being trained into ſtrict obedience and union by the help of deſpotiſm.

The firſt prey marked out by this triple-headed monſter is Poland; which, if ſubdued, will augment its dependents to near *ſeventy millions*.—The next attempt forming is upon France, which, if it ſucceeds, as it may do (though God forbid,) their tremendous coalition will riſe to *above ninety millions of the moſt military people in the univerſe* (making almoſt *three-fourths* of our whole European population) commanding a *large navy*; and by ſtretching in a broad, continued, and impenetrable zone acroſs the whole middle of Europe, dividing the north of it from the ſouth.—In the north of Europe there remain Denmark and Sweden, conſtituting a part of the Baltic ſhores; but as the triumvirate poſſeſs the remainder of theſe ſhores, convenience, it is to be conceived, will form a ſufficient title with ambitious minds, to ſeize upon the whole of them; ſo that theſe countries after reſuming the name of Scandinavia, as a mark of ancient union, may be made ſubſervient to their navy and maritime reſources, (particularly ſince by perfecting the canal acroſs Holſtein they will facilitate and quicken their own communication between the Baltic and the Atlantic, while the ſhutting up the paſſage of the Sound will totally cut it off to ſtrangers).—In the ſouth of Europe, none will doubt for a moment the fate of European Turkey. The parts of Italy not already ſubject to the Auſtrian connexion, may become in their turn an eaſier

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conqueſt than even Turkey. It is at the ſame time certain that Spain and Portugal, whoſe riches are a lure, rather than a protection, will not offer a more ſucceſsful reſiſtance, if attacked, than France and Poland; eſpecially after France and Poland, and other conqueſts ſhall have concurred, *as is intended*, to ſwell the mighty torrent.—And as to Holland, it cannot avoid being drawn into the devouring vortex, by intrigues or by fear.—It is impoſſible to ſpecify in this place what will be the order and moment of any one of the above acquiſitions; it being ſufficient to our argument, that the *whole depends* only upon the convenience and will of the allied Potentates.—Two other branches of Europe only remain to be noticed, of which one is the portion of Germany not yet ſubject to Auſtria and Pruſſia; and the other the Britiſh empire.

I ſhall firſt touch upon *Germany*.—And here I would obſerve, that Pruſſia neceſſarily muſt have formed its union with Auſtria upon principles of *mutual* advantage, ſince a propoſal, for example, for reſtoring to Auſtria ſingly, its *alliance* with France, could not be thought ſincere; and the deſign of plunging Auſtria into a *diſpute with France* was not proper to be avowed; though as being ſtrongly to be ſuſpected, it was neceſſary to find powerful diſguiſes to it in other projects, which at the ſame time required to be of a nature to attract the *concurrence of Ruſſia*.—Was it then a compaſſion for the French King and his family, which was pretended? Surely, after the harſh treatment of the Sovereigns of Poland and Saxony, this pretext could weigh little with Auſtria; whoſe feelings indeed ſeem not very conſiderate with reſpect to that royal family, ſince Auſtria has hitherto increaſed the perils of it, whenever ſhe has added to thoſe of the National Aſſembly and of France.—Neither

can Avignon and the Papal power have been matter of ſerious concert between two ſovereigns profeſſing the Greek or reformed religion on one ſide, and a court on the other, which has not only plundered the Catholic clergy in every quarter; but treated even the Pope with indifference in a late ſupplicatory viſit, which at once proved the injuries of the Pontiff, and the reſolution taken not to redreſs them.—Of the ſame deſcription likewiſe is what reſpects the parties who are diſpoſſeſſioned in the German part of France, and who are affirmed to be under protection of the empire; for the negotiations on this ſubject having never been ſeriouſly countenanced by Pruſſia, and only officially or ſecondarily eſpouſed by Auſtria; Pruſſia and Auſtria cannot be conceived to have made themſelves principals in a hazardous and expenſive war, for a concern negligently purſued during three years, reſpecting petty ſtates, 500 or 600 miles diſtant, in the weſt of Germany; to whom, in fact, they are merely bound by *ceremonials*, to whom alſo an indemnity is offered by France, of whoſe cauſe the merits are more than equivocal, whoſe diſappointment likewiſe cannot be drawn into a precedent for other matters, and whom therefore it would be ſo eaſy and wiſe on various accounts to force into a compromiſe.—Was the ground of *union* then a dread of *democratic* principles? I anſwer no: for Pruſſia, for various and well-known reaſons, is little expoſed to the operation of theſe; and ſhe had even a great deal to gain by their ſuperior tendency to infect the dominions of Auſtria, as well as to terminate the *offenſive and virtually excluſive* alliance ſubſiſting between Auſtria and France. Beſides, a prudent conduct, with the redreſs of grievances, and the aſſiſtance derivable from the concert of princes whenever danger occurred, rendered the King of Pruſſia much ſafer at home, than a dubious

dubious war could make him; and if he had ſeen any real cauſe of dread behind him, he never would have marched the chief of his fineſt forces into diſtant countries, with himſelf at the head of them.—As to Ruſſia, whoſe ſubjects have no communication with the reſt of mankind even in language, whoſe civilization muſt precede her liberty, and who by the aid of one portion of her numerous ſubjects can cruſh ſedition in the other; *her* ſovereign has nothing yet to fear from the declaration of the rights of man, which can divert her from her general ſyſtem of politics.—If theſe ſeveral objects then furniſh no motive by which Pruſſia could at once both be *itſelf* actuated, and receive therein the *concurrence* of Auſtria; no motive, which it could both *poſſeſs* ſecretly and *avow* openly in the negotiation, a negotiation in which Ruſſia, we are always to remember, bears a ſhare as a principal; nothing adequate remains in the way of motive, but *ambition and the deſire of conqueſt.* Theſe deteſtable incentives I affirm are ſufficiently congenial to the *practice* of Princes, to have been mutually offered and accepted, as the baſis of a new born friendſhip, between Courts long habituated to mutual jealouſy, oppoſition, and even hatred.

It is neceſſary, therefore, next to find out what is the ſpecific *prize* which each party has propoſed to itſelf at the preſent moment, or *may aſpire to hereafter*, under ſuch a treaty, in which it muſt never be forgotten that Ruſſia has concurred.—And here we may venture to ſay, that *Pruſſia* could not look to France or to Turkey for *any* booty, nor even to Poland for the *whole* of it. France and Turkey are not contiguous to her; and if the whole of the booty (for Dantzic and Thorn cannot be thought the whole) were to have been extracted from Poland, it is reaſonable to think that the Pruſſian Monarch would have ſtaid at home to look after it in perſon, as being too jealous to receive

it through ſo hazardous a channel as Ruſſia; nor, indeed, would Ruſſia itſelf be likely to have undertaken the whole trouble of this conqueſt, merely to transfer the chief of it to others. A principal incitement, therefore, of Pruſſia, either preſent or future, either openly agreed upon or ſecretly in contemplation, muſt probably, or (which is enough for my purpoſe) may poſſibly be in the neighbouring parts of Germany;—leaving Poland and Turkey thus chiefly to Ruſſia and Auſtria, but *principally* perhaps to Ruſſia;—for Auſtria is led by its *various* pretenſions to quarter itſelf not only on the German part of France, but upon a part of Germany itſelf, which is a rich field of plunder. That Germany can ever ceaſe to be an object of intereſt to an *Emperor of Germany*, is impoſſible; ſince an Emperor, who recollects that his imperial poſt was formerly hereditary, will naturally prefer ruling abſolutely by right, to ruling nominally by election (which, we may obſerve, implies an abolition of the rights of the German Electorates). In the next place, Bavaria has already openly been the ſubject of Auſtrian ambition, and was only ſaved in any degree from that ambition by the interference of Pruſſia. Laſtly, the interview at Pilnitz has been *officially* acknowledged by the parties to have had Germany for one of its objects; but that it was not an object in a *favourable* ſenſe, is proved from the ſecrecy obſerved in it at the moment (the inſulted Elector of Saxony being preſent only at a part of the conferences), as well as from nothing having been ſince done to procure the concurrence of the other co-eſtates to any important conſtitutional meaſures.—It is, however, of no importance to be able to apportion, with accuracy, theſe ſeveral objects among the concerted powers; as there is field enough for all, and the means exiſt of pleaſing each in *various* manners. It is only requiſite to ſhew that

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the *whole* concern is a ſubject of ambition; and that in arranging it, they have no conſent to wait for but their *own*.

If theſe then are, or may *become* the immediate objects of this triumvirate (and either ſuppoſition is ſufficient to demand a counteraction on the part of Europe, I mean the *remnant* of Europe, for the moſt important part of Europe is in the league) it is next neceſſary to ſhew that the views of the triumvirate may be accompliſhed, on the ſide of Germany, with the ſame facility as in Poland and Turkey.—The independent parts of Germany are chiefly of four deſcriptions: firſt, ſeveral great ſucceſſions (as Bavaria and Saxony) about to end in diſtant or female branches, or in the Auſtrian or Pruſſian families: ſecondly, various eccleſiaſtical ſtates, which, whether great or ſmall, being only *life poſſeſſions*, may, without much oppoſition, be converted into hereditary temporal poſſeſſions; (the very treaty of Weſtphalia upon which the eccleſiaſtical Electors inſiſt ſo much, having in the branch of it concluded with Sweden, ſecularized eight archbiſhoprics or biſhoprics; of which four are now in the hands of Pruſſia, *the pretended enemy of innovation*, and two of Hanover:) thirdly, we find municipal governments, over which a monarch may be made to rule without much reſiſtance, and indeed without great violence offered to *hereditary* rights: and laſtly, petty fiefs and principalities, which together with the other more important ſtates of Germany not before included, muſt indiſcriminately follow the law of the ſtrongeſt. Theſe ſtates, it muſt, at the ſame time, be obſerved, are all ſeparated from one another, or elſe all intermingled with the dominions of Auſtria and Pruſſia; conſequently unable of themſelves to coaleſce, even if they felt ſufficiently alarmed for the purpoſe. Laſtly, ſome of theſe ſtates from timidity,

midity, from folly, from bribery, from preſent intereſt, from connexion, and the eccleſiaſtical ſtates from pride and bigotry (having, it is to be obſerved, no family ſucceſſors, whoſe happineſs or ſafety can form an object of their cares) will follow the train of leaders, who, at a more convenient moment, will join their ruin to that of the others.—What then is to prevent this project, whenever it is ſeriouſly entertained, from ſucceeding? Does not the Germanic corps owe its ſafety to the Germanic Conſtitution; and is not the Germanic Conſtitution alone indebted for its perpetuity to Foreign protection, and of late particularly to that of France or of Pruſſia;—that is, is not Auſtria *alone* able to ſubdue the whole, if ſhe were free from check; and will not the ruin be *inevitable*, when Auſtria is aſſiſted by the voluntary concurrence of Pruſſia and Ruſſia, and by the conſtrained aid derived from Poland and other conqueſts? Beſides, ſome attention for a time will be paid to the parties in poſſeſſion, the *great* object for the moment, being to ſecure ſupremacy and a ſupport in all ambitious projects, with a reverſion as to the reſt.—So much for *Germany;* only again repeating, that in a concern ſo full of duplicity as politics, poſſibility is to be regarded with as much jealouſy, as certainty; for caution will be late, when opportunity for uſing caution is at an end.

We come now to the *Britiſh Empire*, which at firſt ſight may appear to be ſafe by its ſolitude and its neutrality, as well as by its proſperity and reſources. But I ſhall paint a picture alarming even to herſelf.—Our population, amounting to twelve millions of ſouls, is weakened by being divided between two iſlands, the principal

principal of which is of a longitudinal form, and therefore with difficulty defended. I will ſuppoſe that its people (though from an impolitic government, it is the only caſe perhaps in which they will do ſo) will unite againſt a plan of univerſal deſpotiſm.—Its land forces being few, a *navy* muſt form its great defence; and here in caſe of invaſion, we come to the uncertain operations of winds and waves: as likewiſe to the ignorance (as in the time of the Danes) where a northern hoſtile fleet will direct its attack, whether on our Eaſt or Weſt coaſt; and whether a Southern hoſtile fleet portends invaſion to Great-Britain or to Ireland; at the ſame time that a ſtrong guard muſt be kept oppoſite to the ports of the Low Countries in the Eaſt. —The foundation of all theſe hoſtile naval armaments is to be had in the various naval forces belonging to the Baltic, to the Low Countries, to France, and to the Mediterranean; it is to be had in the will of deſpotiſm alone; for it would be a part of the pride of ambitious Princes to exceed in naval matters the ſudden maritime efforts of Rome againſt Carthage. Their diſtance too from us is ſhort, and therefore the expence and maritime ſkill called for are leſs; and if a lodgment is once made upon our territory; if our naval arſenals are once deſtroyed, if the reſources of the Baltic ſhall be cloſed, while thoſe of America are diſtant, (as Ireland is without the means of aſſiſting a fleet and without the means of tranſporting over to us its re-inforcements of troops) what ſhall we have to oppoſe to the innumerable land forces, which may then be poured in upon us?—I ſhall ſay nothing of our national debt, and the immenſity of our paper circulation:—rather let us look to our foreign dependencies. Great-Britain is capable of conſiderable efforts againſt enemies at a diſtance, on account of her

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comparative wealth, and the aids which ſhe obtains in *detail* from every quarter of the globe. But as all her foreign poſſeſſions are detached, they can neither aſſiſt herſelf, nor ſuccour each other, whenever her enemies, no longer fighting her at arms length, but grappling with her at home, confine her to her native reſources. In ſhort, the fate of Tyre, Carthage, Genoa, Venice, Flanders, and Holland, muſt be the fate of Great-Britain, and of every trading power under ſimilar circumſtances; in other words, they muſt depend upon their proportional ſtamina of population, in caſe of domeſtic invaſion. As to India, we ſhall ſoon ſee what is to be expected in that quarter:—but in the mean time, let Britain lend an ear to a word in ſeaſon. Let her view her danger, her poſſible danger only, it is true; but a danger ſtill to be guarded againſt, as much as if it were real; becauſe it can only be ſucceſsfully guarded againſt, by being ſo in time. If our meaſures are not as inſtantaneous as vigorous, our only chance will be to be the laſt devoured; and in the interim, to be kept in a conſtant ſtate of high alarm, and of expenſive but unavailing exertion.

As to the Concert of Princes, as far as it is directed againſt pretended *ſeditions* in this country, it is not only dangerous in a conſtitutional view, but it is uſeleſs; and as far as it is aimed againſt prince and people united, its evils are ſtill greater.—Fatal indeed would be *our* ſituation, if our Sovereign attempted to enter into foreign combinations of a deſpotic and offenſive nature, ſo ill ſuited to the genius both of our nation and of its government;—but no leſs fatal would it be to *himſelf*, becauſe whoever cannot give eſſential *aid*, or cauſe eſſential *terror* to the triumvirate, may be uſed at firſt as an inſtrument, but muſt naturally at laſt become its victim,

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as being the only concluding ſervice to which he can be applied. The family dominions of Hanover and Oſnaburg, and the foreign dominions of the Britiſh Crown, would ſucceſſively diſappear; and with them, at laſt, the very ſeat of his government; but not before terror had led him to abandon rotten boroughs, corruption, religious teſt laws, &c. &c. both here and in Ireland; as well as every prejudice, however fondly cheriſhed, which could prevent the chearful and effectual concurrence of every portion of his people in the general defence.—If he means, therefore, to remain his *own maſter* at home and abroad, he muſt beware of contributing to form a foreign tribunal *ſuperior to himſelf*, in which other aſſociated potentates already poſſeſs a lead, which by the nature of their population, reſources, and continental ſituation, they muſt *always retain*.—To depend upon *family connexions* in the triumvirate, would be weak indeed, after ſeeing what paſſed in the firſt and ſecond triumvirate of Rome, and ſtill more recently between Auſtria and Saxony; eſpecially as all violation of family connexion, whenever called for, may be thrown upon the two other triumvirs, who may in truth have exacted the ſacrifice.

But let us terminate this part by a ſingle queſtion or two. Great-Britain can now obtain the *juſt* objects of her inclinations from any *ſingle* power in Europe;—but can ſhe do this, if the triumvirate goes on, and ſucceeds in its purſuits; eſpecially after the example of triumphant reſiſtance lately exhibited by *Ruſſia*? Great-Britain certainly never can be more happily circumſtanced, than when ſhe is able to negotiate upon the Continent, without the medium of *any ally* whatever; for a ſyſtem of alliances among Potentates, is like a ſyſtem of connexion for paper-circulation among ſpendthrifts or traders,

traders, where each is rendered reſponſible not only for his own tranſactions, but for thoſe of his neighbours;—but if allies are neceſſary, where, let us aſk, after Poland and France are incorporated into the league, or rendered neutral, or incapacitated for action, where ſhall we find ſuch? where is there *one*, which is vigorous, effective, and to be depended upon, within our reach? and is it wiſe, or *pardonable* then, either for the Sovereign, or the Miniſter, to ſuffer us to be reduced to a ſituation ſo abject, ſo calamitous, and ſo irretrievable, as is here deſcribed?

I ſhall now pauſe to anſwer the objection of thoſe who may think theſe cautions viſionary, particularly as being novel.—But it is for the very reaſon that they will *ſeem* viſionary, that they may really ceaſe to be ſo; for at no period is the enemy's ſucceſs more practicable, than when his movements are unexpected.—Beſides, human affairs have lately quitted their languid current, in which they rolled on ſleepily from one period to another. Their old routine has given way to tumultuous commotion, and to ſudden accidents with permanent effects; and as ſeveral of the parts of human ſociety have newly increaſed, and others have recently loſt their ſpring and vigor, a future judgment of their poſition and effects muſt be formed by a ſtrict and prompt attention to their principles.—It is enough for a wiſe man then, to put to himſelf the following queries. Have Pruſſia and Auſtria forgot their political antipathies, and has Ruſſia joined itſelf to them; are they powerful, both ſeparately and in union; are they ambitious, and have they got *ſcent* and in part almoſt poſſeſſion of the prey at preſent in their purſuit; can they be falſe to *others* when it is their intereſt to be falſe; and true to *themſelves* when it is their intereſt to be true;

and

and have they not already learned in Poland, the ſecret of gaining dominion *without war*, by a friendly compromiſe?—What ſtands then in the way of a ſecond partition of Poland, when their forces are in the heart of it, in ſpite of old promiſes and a recent treaty? Are they not already alſo on the frontier of France? Have they not faſcinated every court of Europe by ſpecious arguments or by real terrors, ſo as to leave the nations, they are attempting to hunt down, bereft of every ally; are they not acting upon a deep plan, long concerted, and kept profoundly ſecret; are not military operations by their nature rapid; and ſhall we ſtand like gaping ideots, ſtaggered by the very *force* of truth, and yet crying out, is all this *poſſible*?—Yes, it is poſſible; a part of it is acting; a conſpiracy (which will eventually become one, againſt the whole human race) is begun, ſuch as never was begun before, becauſe it never was practicable before; and its object is in part even completed, before we have adverted to its exiſtence.—Where is the Britiſh Miniſter: is he dead? Does he truſt to cobweb treaties, to flimſy faith, to family connexions, when an event, when a *revolution*, as extraordinary as that of France, is under iſſue; ſome of the eſſential parts of which may be accompliſhed in the following three months of this campaign, in a way never to be recalled? Will not every conqueſt made by the triumvirate, ſtand upon a common bottom; and will not the triumvirate find a common intereſt, therefore, in mutually perſiſting in them (as in the caſe of Poland; where, though humanity pleaded for favour to its miſerable remnant, yet the fear of the doctrine of reſumptions operating, and one crime leading to another, the ſame triumvirate which robbed it in 1775, not only refuſes to it a conſtitution which might reſtore it to its ſtrength and its poſſeſſions,

poſſeſſions, but apparently meditates a farther diviſion of its territory?)—Does the Miniſter wiſh then the ruin not only of Britain, but of *mankind*, to be dated from the æra of his adminiſtration? Will he hazard his character with the preſent age and poſterity, by a falſe or by a negligent ſtep, in the moſt momentous tranſaction which ever came under the deliberation of man? Will he allow it to be ſaid, that he had not eyes to ſee the imminent danger, nor addreſs or power to avert it? Succeſs itſelf in an *eſcape*, will not permit the world to forgive him for leaving any thing upon this occaſion to the ſlighteſt hazard. A wiſe man never gives the ſtaff in politics out of his hand; never truſts himſelf to thoſe, who make a *merit* of ſucceſsful deceit; never places the public ſafety, of which he is maſter, in the hands of men of whom he is not maſter. In the firſt Roman triumvirate, Julius Cæſar gave his daughter in marriage to Pompey, and then ruined this ſon-in-law, who in fooliſh confidence had helped him to his power. In the ſecond triumvirate, Lepidus gave up his brother to be butchered; as Mark Anthony did his uncle; and Auguſtus, his friend Cicero; the triumvirs making this as a *mutual* ſacrifice to their pretended *common* good, or in other words, to the baſeſt ſelf-intereſt. —After theſe ſpecimens ſo deeply recorded in hiſtory by conſequent evils which operated during ſixteen centuries, let us truſt nothing to promiſes, or to original good intentions, and ſtill leſs to family affinities, liable to terminate by various means. Family affinity, if it influenced at all, inſtead of adding to our ſafety, would even add new hazards to our conſtitution; at which, I hope, it is here ſufficient to have hinted.—Man in ſhort, is the ſame animal, ambition the ſame ſeducing motive, and politics the ſame treacherous and cruel

ſchool,

ſchool, that we read of in Tacitus, in Machiavel, and in De Retz: there is no reliance therefore in any thing but in the moſt vigorous precautions; and when theſe are fully taken, it is the *ſurplus* alone which muſt be left to Providence. In politics, none muſt have a *power* joined to an *intereſt* to do miſchief, whatever be the purity of their original intentions; for if they poſſeſs it, the miſchief ſooner or later will be committed, and promiſes will be as eaſily, as early, and as unfeelingly broken, as thoſe of Pruſſia to Poland.—I ſhall prepare for quickly reſuming this ſubject, by briefly analyzing the powers of the ſeveral component parties of the triumvirate.

Ruſſia is an empire as ſingular in its preſent ſtate, as it was in its commencement.—She exhibits the picture of North America in Europe, or of an old country and a new country combined into one; having a population which (owing to eaſy means of ſubſiſtence, which render marriages early and frequent), augments *one-fifth* in every twenty years, in defiance of public and private deſpotiſm. She diſplays a partial luxury in the midſt of wilderneſſes; ſhe has a civilized cabinet at the head of a ſemi-barbarous nation; her people are obſtinate, yet docile; and her peaſants, though awed by their maſters, yet are brave when ſoldiers.—With thirty millions of people which are *thus rapidly and progreſſively increaſing*, Ruſſia is placed invulnerable, in the north-eaſtern corner of Europe. Her territories are bounded by deſarts, by woods, and by inhoſpitable climates; ſhe derives ſtrength from the very barrenneſs and diffuſion of her empire; and ſhe is ſituated out of the reach of all maritime approaches, though herſelf poſſeſſing a conſiderable navy for *offenſive* purpoſes. She has alſo myriads of diſciplined

forces, and a peculiar ſtrength in light troops for keeping in awe large tracts of country; and almoſt all her forces combat with the advantage of different religious prejudices, which leſſen the terrors of death; and they are alſo peculiarly hardy and capable of fatigue. If her empire is vaſt in its extent, her troops, her ſailors, and her ſtores, move through it with incredible celerity, owing to water communications, and to the abundance of horſes belonging to her peaſantry, which admit of *conveyances by poſt*, (either in waggons, or elſe in ſledges upon the ſnow,) both *for her forces and for warlike ſtores.*—At the end of her laſt war but one, ſhe remitted taxes; and at the end of the war juſt concluded, ſhe has not augmented them.—She loſes ſubjects in war, but replaces them by thoſe whom ſhe vanquiſhes, or by the exceſs of the number born from her own people over thoſe which die; ſhe increaſes, therefore, both in war and in peace; and it is this internal or this extraneous increaſe of men, accompanied at the ſame time with an augmentation of cultivation, of arts and of wealth, which (unnoticed by the reſt of Europe,) enables her, upon every ſtruggle, to appear with renewed and accumulated ſtrength.—Laſtly, ſhe ſkirts the whole northern frontier of Aſia; ſhe poſſeſſes the means of attacking its rich weſtern flank completely from north to ſouth; and (ſince diſtance is nothing to Ruſſians,) ſhe is not without acceſs to its eaſtern flank, and to the rich mines of Weſtern America; but above all, (in conſequence of having the means of invading our Eaſt-Indian poſſeſſions from the north, facilitated by the help of water carriage on great lakes and deſcending rivers; as well as by having a probable opportunity through the aid of Auſtria, of commanding one or both of the two navigations of the Red Sea and the Perſian Gulph,) ſhe ſeems to draw cloſe to the moment of obtaining poſ-

ſeſſion

ſeſſion of that *communication between weſtern and eaſtern nations*, which in *all ages* of the world has uniformly and ſignally aggrandized thoſe who have held it.—— In one word, ſhe is become the modern *northern hive*, pouring forth, not diſorderly, but marſhalled and obedient ſwarms, increaſing yearly in their numbers by land and by ſea, all recognizing a common chief, whoſe watchful eyes turn alike to the Eaſt and to the Weſt, to ſearch for opportunities of plunder, either in company or alone; rendering barbarians her immediate inſtruments, and the rich her certain victims; and being likely ſoon to poſſeſs that moſt dangerous of all combinations; namely, numbers, arms, and wealth.

Auſtria is the power next in order. Poſſeſſed of fewer vacant lands and fewer ſcattered ſettlements, than Ruſſia, ſhe has nevertheleſs in her *eaſtern* territories the means, by better management, of greatly augmenting her people, now amounting to twenty millions, and *ſtill increaſing*. All that ſhe may receive in the way of acceſſion either of territory or of people, will enhance this advantage.—As to the military diſpoſitions of this power, they are well known; her family connexions alſo, as far as ſhe can depend upon them, are conſiderable; and her influence over every thing turned to the quarter of the Mediterranean, will ſoon become conſpicuous, when acting in concert with Ruſſia and Pruſſia.

Laſtly, we come to *Pruſſia*, poſſeſſing a population nearly equal to a third of that of Auſtria. Pruſſia is a factitious ſtate, it is true, and requires the continuance of the ſame good management, which brought it gradually forwards to its preſent comparative proſperity, and it is alſo void of internal means (like thoſe of Ruſſia and Auſtria) for multiplying her people;—but yet ſhe poſſeſſes an immenſe army, which her late King, in

conſequence of applying the doctrines of *mechanics* to tactics, has brought to the higheſt pitch of known perfection. At the ſame time ſhe has nothing to fear from her debts, her taxes, her nobles, her clergy, from aſſemblies of ſtates, from an expoſed ſtate of commerce, from her frontiers (as long as they remain protected by her preſent allies,) or from any cauſe whatever but her follies and her dangerous aſſociations.—Had the preſent Monarch of Pruſſia, alas! conſulted the writings of his ſagacious predeceſſor, he would have found hints enough to alarm him reſpecting the power and ſituation of Ruſſia; and upon proper enquiry, he would have known that the ſtate of Poland had alſo made an impreſſion upon his mind; ſince not only from fear of Ruſſia and of Auſtria, but in order to make ſome atonement to humanity and to character, he wiſhed to give to the remains of Poland ſuch a conſtitution, as ſhould ſecure its *independence* as a barrier, and form a *compenſation* for its wrongs. But Pruſſia has diſdained prudence and generoſity; and in ſo doing, has proved the magnitude and ſolidity of her temptations.

Such then, are the three potentates already ſo contiguous by ſituation, as to be able to give each other effectual ſupport and protection, who are now compacted together in military union upon principles of conqueſt, as is demonſtrated by the *late* diviſion of Poland, and by the preſent compromiſe reſpecting it.—Common ſenſe ſhews what is or may be in their *power*, and human nature ſhews to what that power will *prompt them*.—It therefore becomes neceſſary to know what means there are to oppoſe it, in the remaining ſcattered fragments of Europe; ſhould Poland and France, as before mentioned, either be *incorporated into their ſyſtem, be diſabled, or be rendered neutral*.—But as I reſerve this topic

topic for my concluſion, it is fair that I ſhould be allowed in the mean time to ſhew the *evils* of a ſyſtem of univerſal military deſpotiſm, both to the human race ſuffering it, and to the conquerors impoſing it.

PART II. OF LETTER II.

Publiſhed July 30, 1792.

IN delineating the nature and conſequence of *univerſal military* deſpotiſm, it is unneceſſary to point at particular perſons; and, therefore, while I found myſelf upon general facts not to be conteſted, none can complain but thoſe, whoſe very complaint will naturally bring their motives into ſuſpicion.

We deſire then to know how far Princes may become degenerate and miſchievous, when the fear of their ſubjects and neighbours is extinguiſhed?—The ſolution is eaſy. We have only to enquire what muſt be the reſult of ignorance and of want of ſentiment, of jealouſy and irritability, of caprice and ungoverned paſſions, when inſtigated by intrigue, and joined to power without a limit. —I am no oppoſer of monarchs; I deteſt alſo inflammatory language; and I feel a ſort of reſpect towards a part of the preſent triumvirate, in compariſon with other Princes. But I ſtill muſt perſiſt in affirming, that the character of military deſpotiſm when viewed in its exceſſes, is ſuch, as I have deſcribed it;—and that it is to this pitch that the ſyſtem of Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia, in defiance of their preſent leſs culpable intentions, muſt ultimately arrive, if it accompliſhes what muſt ſucceſſively become its different objects.—I ſay, this is what their ſyſtem muſt *terminate in*: but firſt let us ſee where their ſyſtem actually *begins*.

The *maximum* then of foreign liberty to which they lend their ſuffrage, is clearly *leſs* than that exhibited in the New Conſtitution of Poland; for otherwiſe they would have tolerated a Conſtitution highly acceptable both to its People and its King. This maximum alſo *does not exceed* the portion of freedom to which their reſpective ſtates are confined at preſent; ſince if they thought a greater degree of liberty than this, proper in their own dominions, they would long ago have introduced it, having had unbounded power for that purpoſe. But this maximum may be *much leſs* than is even allowed to their own ſubjects; ſince vanquiſhed nations liable to revolt, will be governed by rules far more rigid than are neceſſary for native ſubjects: that is, in an exact proportion to their love of liberty, and to the degree in which they might profit by the uſe of it, they are to be deprived of its various bleſſings; for while petty tyrants are obliged to enter into a compromiſe with liberty, great tyrants will employ the briefer remedy of cruſhing that liberty altogether. This maximum then muſt be ſuch for example, as will ſeem revolting to the Britiſh empire, as well as to France, (whether the latter compares it with her preſent, or her late conſtitution,) and I hope to every other nation.—We have here, however, ſpoken only of the *maximum* of permitted liberty, and this too at the preſent moment; for in the deſcending ſcale, there are many gradations before we arrive at that *minimum* of liberty, without which it is impoſſible for afflicted man to exiſt as the ſubject of tyranny; gradations, of which Europe may yet conſole itſelf, that it can only find in Aſia and Africa any preſent examples.

But as the *power* of tyranny increaſes, when in concert with tyranny in contiguous countries; ſo the *miſery* which ſprings from it, redoubles when the tyranny becomes

comes univerſal.—When deſpotic States border upon ſuch as are free, the deſpot naturally becomes ſoftened: he ſees in his neighbours a cenſor of his actions; his people alſo borrow their feelings and knowledge, and give him alarm; conviction is ſnatched from him in ſpite of himſelf, as to the genial effects of liberty upon wealth and population, which are the neceſſary foundation of all the taxes and armies with which he has to face his enemies; even the love of fame alſo creeps into his heart, and like Alexander, he wiſhes to be praiſed by Athenians; if he preſſes likewiſe his ſubjects too ſeverely, they flee from him; and commerce and arts no leſs certainly diſdain his injuſtice and reſtraints. But foreigners are of great benefit in other reſpects; they ally themſelves by marriage and affinity to the Sovereign and to the ſubject; they are employed to educate their children; the books they write, paſs into the hands of leading men among them; ſpecimens of their arts excite attention; they become miniſters, generals, prelates, and perhaps ſovereigns; and deſpotic princes ſometimes, quitting the dungeon of their own dominions where they act only as the head jailers, find from the example of neighbouring nations how much more ſincere and beneficial is the attachment which is founded upon affection and intereſt, than that which is founded upon fear and reſtraint. In proof of this, let me refer to Ruſſia; where almoſt every brilliant tranſaction from the time of Czar Peter to the preſent day, has chiefly been owing to foreign inſtruments, or to a travelled or foreign ſovereign, or to Ruſſians, who directly or *indirectly* have been indebted for their education to foreigners.—Darkneſs is the natural ſtate of the human mind without improvements. In the darkneſs of the night, various travellers may find their way, if a ſingle one in company is poſſeſſed

of a torch; but ſuppoſe that lonely torch extinguiſhed, how great is the darkneſs. A handful of men extracted from ſome of the enlightened parts of Europe have been the torch-bearers of Ruſſia; and the conſequence is, that there are few nations who ſeem ſo incapable under preſent circumſtances of taking a *lead* in the arts and ſciences, and who are ſo little poſſeſſed of formal inſtructions, but who are more *effectually* inſtructed in many particulars of practice; in conſequence of their having received foreigners among them, not from one, but from *different* nations.—But darkneſs is not only the lot of man in his *native* nothingneſs;—but whenever tyrants reign in ſolitude, they create an *artificial* darkneſs; for with them, education, knowledge, activity, ſocial intercourſe, love of one's country, and the chief of the moral virtues, are conſidered in the odious light of reſiſting principles with reſpect to their tyranny; and are therefore proſcribed and extinguiſhed: and as to commerce and agriculture, which depend upon *capital* as their firſt mover, the ſavage deſpot ſeizes upon that capital as faſt as it appears, and thus kills the hen which lays his golden eggs, and cuts down the tree of which he wiſhes to gather the fruit.

To know how little there is ſpontaneous in the region of deſpotiſm, and how greatly liberty on the other hand by its nature is prolific; we have only to compare the enterprizes both of body and mind, formerly exhibited by certain ſmall free communities of Greece and Aſia, with thoſe exhibited by the immenſe dominions of deſpotiſm, in which they are immerſed in modern times; a contraſt, which is the more remarkable in ſeveral views, as the proprietors of theſe very dominions in the middle ages, while they enjoyed a certain portion of freedom joined to their religious enthuſiaſm;

thuſiaſm; were not only memorable for feats of arms, but in conſequence of availing themſelves of fragments of inſtruction derived from the above-mentioned communities, (or from the Romans, who were *alſo* their pupils,) remained for ſome time ſignalized in ſcience, in agriculture, and in arts, till the night of general military deſpotiſm *returned* to darken them.——In like manner two or three modern towns, retired in the Alps, whoſe inhabitants together do not amount to ſixty thouſand ſouls, have produced more remarkable men (arms alone excepted) in the preſent century, than the whole empire of Ruſſia, which now contains half as many millions, and than ſeveral other European kingdoms taken in addition.

The ſeveral great monarchies of the world have proved great experiments upon the human character, both as to the prince and the ſubject.—They have in general been acquired by ſome ſpecies of talents, which talents they have ſoon abſorbed and extinguiſhed; and the maſter has then become the moſt depraved of mankind, and the ſubject the moſt degenerate. They have each been rendered worſe, becauſe the extent of the dominion to be governed neceſſarily required the government to be *military*, for the purpoſe of retaining the diſtant parts of it, which would naturally remain obedient to nothing beſides force.—Thoſe who have force, are ſoon led to think that it ſuperſedes every other requiſite of government, whether for home or foreign objects: and the principle or the conſequences of this perſuaſion ſpread from the ſovereign to the landed proprietor, and to every order of men. None then are inſtructed or will humble themſelves to receive inſtruction; and the paſſions of the human breaſt, which it is one of the chief objects of education to ſuppreſs,

redouble

redouble all their fury. The evil then acts continually backwards and forwards upon itself, and princes and their subjects debase one another in turn, till one universal deluge of misery and confusion soon overwhelms the whole; and no where an ark is found to save the remnant of mankind, nor does an olive-branch any where give token of a resting-place.—Wretched people, but *still more* wretched prince! For, among the first, some escape a part of the evil from their insignificance; but the latter is constantly placed on an elevation, as a mark to the arrows of fortune, without understanding the manner in which he ought to enjoy its favours.—It is in vain, that in the course of these horrors a single man, (who has been probably introduced to power by that *mutability* in the succession to it, which is incident to despotic states,) starts up to remedy them. Mankind are only permanently governed by fixed institutions; and over a corrupted empire, a single virtuous prince acts merely the part of a fleeting minister. He soon perishes either by the course of time, or by the earlier hand of violence; too good to be endured by those, whose only support or safety is in the profligacy or ignorance of their sovereign; leaving no trace behind him but that of unavailing memory, and fully proving how impossible it is to correct despotism otherwise than by abolishing it.—This is not rhapsody. The mild, peace-loving, and literary Augustus was followed by four monsters, beginning with Tiberius, and ending with Nero; Titus was succeeded by Domitian, as was Marcus Aurelius by Commodus; and what is the more remarkable, Augustus and Aurelius had each the choice and adoption of their successors. At last, by a series of villany and distraction, the Roman empire, too immense to fall a prey to any thing

thing in the *firſt* inſtance but itſelf, became in part conquered, and then divided; and though danger cauſed afterwards ſome exertions, they were oftener the exertions of baſeneſs and compromiſe, than of courage and prudence; till the laſt remnant of the empire in the eaſt, died the moſt effeminate of deaths, falling into the hands of the barbarous Mahomedans with ſcarcely a ſtruggle.—In like manner theſe Mahomedans themſelves, following a ſimilar deſpotic courſe, being ſanguinary to their ſubjects, and feeble towards their enemies; forgetting the very art which is firſt learned and laſt loſt among deſpots, namely, that of war; living upon the very entrails of their dominions, without one care taken for their proſperity; and diſdaining all knowledge, (which from the nature of their language and inſtitutions cannot eaſily be forced upon them from without;) are now kept together more by the influence of their *religion*, than of their policy; but are ſtill ready to fall a prey to the firſt potentate that ſhall ſtorm their capital.—Whoever goes through the hiſtory of what are called the four great monarchies of the world, and joins to it the hiſtory of the ſeveral monarchies of the *eaſt*, not included in that imperfect catalogue; will find the ſame ſucceſſion of follies and calamities, with only an exception in China; which yet is but a ſpecious exception, or elſe as far as it is real, is ſolely owing to fixed *inſtitutions* that are not to be ſhaken even by conquerors from without or by deſpots from within.

But to deſcend from *general* topics, let us prove minutely, but briefly, in what manner an univerſal military deſpotiſm will injure, firſt, the *ſeveral orders* of ſociety; next,

next, the intereſts of inferior princes; and, laſtly, the perſons and families of deſpots themſelves.

To begin then with the ſeveral orders of ſociety, let us firſt touch upon the *ariſtocracy*.—In Turkey, there is none of this ſubſiſting as to families; it being the policy of that government to interrupt ſucceſſions. In Ruſſia, the great by birth are diſcountenanced, and live for the moſt part diſcontented at Moſcow; while new men, foreigners, and favourites, find their way at court. In Spain, the grandees are not permitted to quit the court or the capital; or elſe when they wiſh to travel, even within Spain itſelf, they are obliged to give an account of their motions; and upſtarts are daily riſing to ſupplant them in court favour. Even lately in France, they were all obliged by a ſort of etiquette, which was the reſult of a court ſyſtem, to ſerve in the army; at the ſame time that the allurements of a poliſhed and enlightened capital were ſufficient of themſelves to inſure their reſidence in the neighbourhood of the court. I need not ſay more as to the ariſtocracy.—Next come the *Clergy*, whoſe dignitaries, even in France, were looked at with a jealous eye, when they pretended to reſide at their poſt of duty in the provinces. In Ruſſia, it was the boaſt of Czar Peter to have reduced his clergy to much more ſubmiſſive terms than Louis XIV. had done. In the dominions of the Auſtrian family, notwithſtanding the pretended devout character of the late Empreſs, the clergy are plundered, and rendered daily more and more impotent, by every branch of her deſcendants in their different dominions; and the Pope has experienced repeated inſults or litigations from them all. The decline not only of religious credulity, but even of religious faith, daily weakens the ſupport of the clergy;

clergy; and their prefent riches are a perpetual temptation to needy princes, or a ſource of diſcontent to the ſubject; ſo that that part of theſe riches which is tenable, will be aſſumed by the deſpot; and that part which is unpopular, will be ſurrendered to the people, to ſoothe them in ſome moment of diſſatisfaction; and be replaced probably in ſome inadequate manner, or elſe end in the clergy being thrown upon the people for voluntary contributions. As to the powers and privileges of the hierarchy, we know from the caſes of Henry VIII. of England and Czar Peter, how faſhionable it will ſeem to deſpots, to be declared the ſupreme heads of their reſpective churches; and ſuppoſing that they ſhould be inclined to contemplate the clergy, rather as a ſource of ſupport, than of hoſtility, it is ſtill natural that they ſhould think of making this order at leaſt *obedient and œconomical;* for which the method is perfectly ſimple, and free from the objections ſuggeſted by Mr. Hume. I mean, by reducing the whole clerical eſtabliſhment to its goſpel ſimplicity, and appointing all the members of it; by giving them a previous bigotted and enſlaved education; rendering the chiefs of it few, and utterly dependent; proſcribing all novelties; making its ceremonies payable out of civil funds, and obliging civil and military perſonages to lend ſuch a temporary character of oſtentation to religion, as it is thought neceſſary that it ſhould receive. So much for the clergy.—Next comes the *Senate*, compounded in part of the preceding orders. Civil power we have ſuppoſed extinct, for *inter arma leges ſilent;* of what uſe then is the ſenate? To do *good*, it is inadequate; and when there is no public, it cannot even expect the pay given to mercenaries for the *evils* it might otherwiſe ſanction, as an intermediate body.

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To ſee the extremity of the evil, let it be remembered that Caligula made his horſe into a conſul; and that Didius, after having bought the Roman Purple, which was openly put to auction by the pretorian guards, went directly to the ſenate to tell them in expreſs words, that they wanted an emperor, and he was the man to anſwer their purpoſe; and Charles XII. of Sweden, when he was wandering about Germany and Poland, waſting the forces and treaſures of his people and embroiling their intereſts, ſignified to his ſenate, that if they refuſed obedience to his orders, he would ſend back his boot to govern them.—As to the *third eſtate*, it wants its name, when the ſecond is extinguiſhed. But even in its more expanded ſhape, of private citizens, what is it but the mere ſubſtratum of power? beings who are to labour, but not to enjoy; who are to ſuffer and not to complain; and who are to contribute, without receiving any other protection for it, than is ſuggeſted by caprice or commanded by intereſt. Safe neither in property nor in perſon; denied the power of locomotion for their *own* purpoſes, but forced to abandon their homes and families for the objects of power; dragged even into wars againſt their inclinations, there to provoke the revenge of an enemy, or to confirm their own ſlavery and that of other nations; their property and their labour preſſed into the ſervice of the deſpot or his ſubalterns, whenever it ſuits their purpoſes; no utterance allowed to any of their wrongs, each man being afraid even of his neighbour in private; theſe and a thouſand ſimilar circumſtances, are ſo ordinary in deſpotic countries, as ſcarcely to excite notice: but madmen indeed are thoſe, who are content to let ſuch a lot become their *own*.—*Trade*, commerce, agriculture, and the arts, cannot exiſt where capital,

capital, laws, activity, and knowledge are wanting. We might as well expect the vegetable and animal world to exist without the vivifying power of the sun.—Besides, tyranny never will allow that long continuance of tranquillity and confidence, and that identity of laws, which are necessary for the slow processes of industry, and for that sisterhood in it, without which there is little of it which can prosper. Arts of amusement, such as music, and watch-making, (which last was the occupation of the grave Charles the Fifth;) or else the military profession, while attention to it is found necessary; together with certain establishments of a public nature, which though profusely or unskilfully conducted, yet will be sure of protection, because in the hands of him, who is master of every thing, may to a certain degree flourish; and botany, chemistry, and mathematics may retain a hazardous existence, because they may be cultivated without lending any spring and extension to the human mind, and therefore without causing umbrage; but accident alone can lead us to expect any great enlargement of this catalogue of objects, beyond mere articles of necessity.—The effect of an inroad made upon the *laws* is too easily comprehended to require much illustration; since from the judicial and legislative branches resting in the same hands, the administration of justice must necessarily require much instability; and the violence and caprice of the despot will add to this evil; and still more his favoritism and the venality of his subalterns. Courts of law in these situations only afford a more expensive mode of arriving at *injustice*, and have the single advantage of bringing suits to some issue. Be it observed, however, that under these circumstances forensic talents have little chance of making progress, unless under the wing of favour; and that

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the profeſſional pay of the lawyer is here ſmall, and his conſideration in his country trifling, compared with what is known in England; where the law has been the foundation of many noble and wealthy families, as well as of the moſt ſplendid reputations; ſome of our very barriſters, for example, having been applauded in various parts of Europe.—We now come to two critical bodies, *miniſters* and the army. In England we have ſeen a miniſter capable of long holding his ſovereign at bay; and one of the common modes of attaining a poſt in adminiſtration is, by becoming important in oppoſition; the career to high offices alſo is open to all perſons; and to be ejected from Miniſtry is no diſgrace, but may even produce honour. How different is this from deſpotic countries? Where Miniſters live by the breath of a tyrant; where death, baniſhment, or diſgrace, mark a reverſe of fortune; where it is commonly an etiquette, never to reinſtate the fallen; and where they are often treated with ſuch contempt in the concerns of their office, that the late King of Pruſſia is affirmed once to have ſaid to his Miniſters, *Canaille, arrangez vous.* No ſenate opens a road to power; and to think of *alarming* the public on public topics, would be inſtant death. In this ſtate of things there is nothing to expect but from proſtitution, from bribery, and from intrigue; the diſpenſer of offices and power being commonly a miſtreſs in male courts, a paramour in female ones, and pimps, panders, domeſtics, flatterers, and intriguers in all of them.—Laſtly, we are to ſpeak of the *army;* for the army at leaſt, as the inſtrument of all, will be thought an order in the ſtate, not only ſure of protection, but of ſolid encouragement. By no means. The common ſoldier is no where more oppreſſed, than in deſpotic ſtates; for to give room to keep

keep up many troops, he is poorly paid; and to ſupply the want of inclination, he is made a mere machine, the moving power of which is his fear. In all armies too, there is the diſtinction of body guards or pretorian bands on the one ſide, and the marching regiments or troops of the line on the other. The former may be careſſed, and the latter neglected: the former are near to the ſource of court favors, hold the ſovereign in their hands, and are the commencers of revolutions; but the latter are conſidered as little more than ordinary ſubjects; and when any part of them are diſcontented, the reſt are made to oppoſe them; which, in a vaſt army, is perfectly eaſy. Who can deny too, that favourites proceed by a rapid progreſs to principal commands, in defiance of veteran pretenſions; and that civil ſuſpicions and puniſhments are eaſily extended to military perſons? Beſides, who is there likely to ſympathize with liberal feelings in a deſpotic army, made up by policy from vagrants and banditti, from foreign or from ſavage materials, and where every thing is held as much inſulated and diſconnected as poſſible, unleſs where the parties poſſeſs kindred principles and intereſts with the deſpot? In ſhort, a great army is eaſily kept under by military and civil laws, and a few executioners. What then is to be the new privilege, or conſolation of the ſoldier or officer, who in addition to his military duty is to be employed to wring taxes from the poor, to enforce the rigours of puniſhment, to act perhaps againſt his friends or his native province, and to take up his quarters in abject or deſerted countries? —Thus we have gone through the principal orders of ſociety, as ſituated under the blaſting operation of a wide-ſpreading military deſpotiſm. Let the man who befriends it, go and live in Turkey and Morocco, as

the places congenial to his ſoul. Let us, in this part of Europe at leaſt, lift againſt it not only our faces, but our ſwords.

We proceed to our next topic, the intereſts of *ſovereigns of an inferior rank*, in caſe the evil we are here alluding to ſhould become general.—It is impoſſible that we cannot remember in hiſtory ſome accounts of the ſtate of *dependent* princes; and do they not ſhew the very depths of ignominy? Homage, tributes, contingents of forces, perſonal attendance, permiſſion neceſſary to conclude family-marriages, a traffic often exiſting for their very thrones, ſpies ſet upon their governments; theſe are ſome of the inſtances of their hard fate; and to this ſtate they have been brought, after having firſt been the prey of war, and of contending parties, and perhaps the victims of the baſeſt treachery and ingratitude.—But I ſhall not be long on this head. The Apoerypha gives us an account of Alexander, which is too finiſhed, and too much to the point for me to make much addition to it. It is as follows—"And Alexander made many wars, and won many "ſtrong holds, and ſlew the *kings* of the earth, and "took ſpoils of many *nations*, inſomuch that the earth "was quiet before him, [that is, *ſolitudinem facit, "& pacem apellat:*] whereupon he was exalted, and "his heart was lifted up; and he gathered *a mighty "ſtrong hoſt*, and ruled over countries, and nations, "and kings, who became tributaries to him; and after "theſe things he fell ſick * * *. So Alexander reigned "twelve years, and then died. And his ſervants bare "rule every one in his place; and after his death "they all put crowns upon *themſelves*; ſo did their ſons "after them many years, and *evils were multiplied in the "earth.*"—Let this extract ſerve as a warning both

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to ſmaller princes and to greater deſpots.—The preſent military Concert of Princes, let me only add, is not like the ſmall cloud as big as a man's hand, mentioned in ſcripture, which ſwelled into a devouring tempeſt. No; it is a full-grown evil, born with giant limbs and adult ſtrength, and threatens what it will exactly fulfil, the ruin of all by the ſword.—For a little while it will uſe ſoft words; but it will be truer in its actions: and after firſt attacking particular territories and ſubjects, will end in a war with the whole human race; among which it will reckon princes but as a *higher ſort of ſubjects*, and often on that very account as parties to be dreaded. It is in vain to think that the evil has any bounds, when the paſſion of princes does not conſiſt ſo much in enjoying, as in acquiring.

We now come laſtly to trace this malady of univerſal military deſpotiſm back to its *fountain head;* for here again we find, that as it inflicts calamities upon others, ſo it ſpares not its own authors.—In milder monarchies, the ſovereign experiences a ſhare of that juſtice which is permitted to circulate through the nation; for violence to the reigning prince is rare on the part of the public, without extraordinary general provocation; and on the part of individuals, it would be uſeleſs, as a ſtranger could not profit by it, ſince the ſucceſſion would take its courſe to his excluſion; and thoſe in the line of ſucceſſion would ſuffer too much in reputation, as well as from the effect of the precedent, to attempt it. Hence France, ſince it became a ſettled nation, during very many centuries, has had but three dynaſties; and England has changed its order of ſucceſſion very rarely, except from conqueſt, confuſion of title, and great religious or political provocations. In ſhort, the people have in general been appealed to as judges reſpecting the

throne, in limited monarchies; and the crown has hence in general, deſcended with all the ſacredneſs of an article of *family property*;—but in deſpotic ones, the whole is matter of junto and accident, for as there is very little difference between the candidates, and little animation or knowledge in the public reſpecting its own affairs, the public ſeldom interferes in the proceedings at the capital.—We have only, in order to confirm this, to call to witneſs the events of Ruſſia, during the preſent century; where a ſucceſſion to the throne is another word for a revolution; and where the prince has been more inſecure upon it, both as to life and property, than the ſubject.—What was the caſe at Rome? Auguſtus was ſuſpected to have been poiſoned by his wife or by her ſon whom he had adopted, as was Titus by his brother Domitian. In ſhort, death was dealt with ſo liberal a hand in the form of aſſaſſinations, executions, and murders in battle, as well by relations and by pretended friends, as by enemies; that the throne ſeemed but a ſlaughtering block.—I have already cited the fate of Alexander, who though he had a ſon, had none of his probable wiſhes executed either with regard to his ſon or to his dominions.—In Turkey, they have commonly been ſtrict as to the line of ſucceſſion, on account of the protection given to the deſcendants of their prophet; that is, on account of a religious prejudice. Let us therefore, without troubling ourſelves with Morocco or Egypt, or with Perſia or India, cite the caſe of China in the words of Monteſquieu.—" In the hiſtory of " China," (ſays this great writer) " we find it has had " twenty-two ſucceſſive dynaſties; that is, it has expe- " rienced twenty-two general, without mentioning a " prodigious number of particular revolutions. The " three firſt dynaſties laſted a long time, becauſe they

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" were wiſely adminiſtered, and the empire had not ſo " great an extent as it afterwards obtained. But we " may obſerve in general, that all thoſe dynaſties began " very well. Virtue, attention, and vigilance are neceſ- " ſary in China: theſe prevailed in the commencement " of the dynaſties, and failed in the end. * * * * After " the three or four firſt princes, corruption, luxury, indo- " lence and pleaſure, poſſeſſed their ſucceſſors; they ſhut " themſelves up in a palace; their underſtanding was " impaired; their life was ſhortened; the family declined; " the grandees roſe up; the eunuchs gained credit; none " but children were ſet on the throne; the palace was at " variance with the empire; a lazy ſet of people that " dwelled there, ruined the induſtrious part of the nation; " the Emperor was killed or deſtroyed by an uſurper, " who founded a family, the *third or fourth ſucceſſor of* " *which* went and ſhut himſelf up in the *very ſame* " *palace.*"

Such then is the inſtability of human grandeur, and of a mimicry of the extenſive command of Providence; that although bought at ſuch hazard, at the expence of ſo many crimes, and by the ſacrifice of ſo much human happineſs, it is ſcarcely preſerved for the life of the owner; is tranſmitted with little certainty to the immediate deſcendant, and (which may give great room of reflection to the *concerned*) is ſeldom preſerved for the ſucceſſion of *ſecondary or collateral* branches.—All this is owing to ſeveral cauſes. It is owing, for example, to a ſpecies of activity in the human mind, which renders it eager for new paſſive impreſſions, and for objects from without; though it is indolent in providing itſelf with objects from within. Old ſcenes ſoon ſatiate and diſguſt the ungovernable minds of deſpots, who may deſtroy nations, but cannot alter their own make and conſtitution;

which require that temperance, virtue, and information, ſhould aid in procuring them content under a long renewal of the ſame ſet of circumſtances of body and mind. But ſince after ſatiety, ſtill there ariſes hope; new objects are ſtill demanded by deſpots, which are again to be rejected for others yet newer; till at laſt it is found out, that neither variety nor quantity can ſatisfy a temper once ſmitten with the vaſt deſire of poſſeſſing *every thing*.—Another fatal cauſe of irritation to the ambition of princes, is oppoſition. Shall man, born to rule, find any obſtacle? Every thing is therefore to be removed, and a level proſtrate plain is to lie between *them*, and the objects with which they have connexion. This again is a never ceaſing paſſion, and ſtrengthens in proportion to its habitual indulgence.—A third inſtigation is the love of praiſe, which is alſo inexhauſtible. To poſſeſs much, and to have uſed ſucceſsful art or courage in obtaining it, how flattering, how intoxicating! till at laſt, like other intoxications, it ceaſes, and requires new enterpriſes to refreſh its feelings. Is this all, ſaid Cæſar, when he had poſſeſſed himſelf of all. Alas! *cælum mutant, non animum, qui trans mare currunt*.—Now and then perhaps, an uneaſy ſentiment occurs, but it is ſoon quieted. "The parties injured, (ſays the aggreſſor,) if they "could, would have done the ſame by myſelf; I have "committed no other wrong, than others have committed "before me; the world has forgiven them, and it will "forgive me; beſides, the conqueſts I have acquired "will be better governed by me, than by others; and "what ſignifies it to the people concerned, whether they "are governed by others or by me?"—This is the veil of gauze uſed to cover rapine and blood; and it ſerves to ſhelter even the aſſiſtance given to *other* deſpots, by whoſe means in return their *own* proceedings are rendered

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more ſecure.—This is the more mortifying to their wretched ſubjects, who know that after all this varied round of guilt, after eſtabliſhing proſcriptions, informers, tortures, and death, and after even ſelling a privilege for murder; the whole *ends* in private enjoyments the moſt trivial or the moſt abominable. Read the authentic memoirs of courts which are *merely arbitrary*, and which are far removed from deſpotiſm: if there is not vice in them, yet there is dulneſs; or elſe a recourſe to the ſame enjoyments of operas, games, exerciſe, reading, needle-work, and the like; which proves inconteſtibly to the obſerving mind, that happineſs lies alone, (as was before ſtated,) in *virtue, temperance, information, and content*:—Infinitely worſe are the courts of *deſpots*.

I feel much pain in all this deſcription, leſt, while I am purſuing facts, I ſhould be thought to quit the feelings of an impartial man.—But the proofs are great, the object is of unſpeakable magnitude, and there is no time to loſe.—There is a coalition of forces formed, which, like Aaron's rod, will ſwallow up the forces of every other power. This miſchief will happen, without care, before the world ſuſpects it; and no care is ſufficient, but that of demanding an immediate ceſſation of the Concert of Princes; for if the Concert proceeds, and attains its object, deſpotiſm, (unknown as I will do the parties the juſtice to ſuppoſe, to the wiſhes of the original actors,) will rapidly produce its effects.—Scruples will not long delay the horrid tragedy, even if it paſs to be acted in its laſt ſcenes into new and other hands, for cauſes will always accompliſh their conſequences; and deſpotiſm having always the ſame materials to work upon in thoſe ruling and ruled, will generate theſe conſequences, with a *celerity* of which I ſhall give but two inſtances.—The firſt is that of Alexander, who was in

many reſpects the boaſt of antiquity, but who inſtantly after the ſucceſsful conteſt which his father and himſelf had had with the free nations of Greece and Thrace; though he had Philip for his father, Ariſtotle for his tutor, a civilized world which he much admired for his judges; though he had peculiar magnanimity, talents, and love of ſcience; yet in the courſe of conquering the world, killed his friend in drink, burned a palace to amuſe a ſtrumpet, and ſighed when his cruel and fantaſtic power was checked for want of objects.—The ſecond example is drawn from Rome, where, after the calm in human affairs produced by Auguſtus, none could have ſuſpected a ſudden reverſe; yet, in what a quick ſucceſſion did four monſters appear, rivalling and ſurpaſſing each other in wickedneſs and miſchief, and tormenting not only foreign nations and their ſubjects, but carrying ſlaughter into the boſom of their own families? Soon indeed was it that Julia, Meſſalina, Agrippina, and Fauſtina, ſhewed that women in a ſcene of unbounded licenſe, could be as execrable as men; and ſtill farther to prove that *levity and cruelty* were eaſily to be aſſociated in the ſame breaſt, the ſame emperors who either formed the wiſh that Rome might have but one neck, or were ready to execute the full purport of it, ſought to play the part of actors and gladiators upon the ſtage before their ſubjects, as the great objects of their ambition.

In one word, men and minor princes, beware. You are in no common times. Powerful princes, inſtead of attacking *each other* for booty, have begun upon the ſyſtem of attacking you. Unite on your ſide, for it is a common cauſe. It is in vain to think when this new miſchief is once under way, that you can ſay to it, *go thus far and no farther*. The parties are poſſeſſed of this peculiar

peculiar advantage, that they not only can *produce* large forces; but they keep large forces *always on foot;* and therefore are ready to act at a *moment's warning*, in order to ſecure their objects. After their ſyſtem has obtained a certain progreſs, they will be hurried on in it, and become unable to ſtop themſelves.—And do not flatter yourſelves that it will ever be retrograde, and leaſt of all on account of the apparent civilization of mankind. We who are to be *devoured indeed*, are civilized; but remember that thoſe who are to devour *us*, were yeſterday only Tartars and Coſſacks, and other ſavage clans; and that although a few of their leaders have that outſide poliſh, which you ſee is conſiſtent with ſtony hearts: yet when theſe leaders die, or become corrupted, the *ſtamina* of their ſubjects are ſuch, as fit them for ſupporting *any project of any nature*.

If you wiſh to know more upon this ſubject, read Tacitus, and Machiavel, before you ally yourſelves to the ſovereigns who have joined together in *military* concert.

PART III. OF LETTER II.

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WE might proceed to an immediate concluſion, but the ſubject is too ample to be ſo ſoon diſmiſſed; and as France will be an important and neneceſſary inſtrument in counteracting the triumvirate, a few impreſſions in particular muſt be obviated reſpecting France as to her foreign politics.—Previous to the late revolution, France was called an *ambitious* power; and in

in the time of Louis XIV. ſhe certainly gave well founded alarms upon this ſubject, *(alarms, which at preſent require to be transferred to very different quarters.)* But ſubſequent to that period, and particularly of late years, having abandoned her ſchemes of univerſal Monarchy, ſhe has acted a part of jealouſy and of intrigue, rather than of ambition; ſhe has aimed at a balance, more than at the conqueſt of Europe, and at the preſervation of power, more than at an increaſe, or at leaſt more than at any dangerous application of it; ſhe has indeed purſued pacific objects (ſuch as trade and colonies) by violent means, but this has been more owing to a failure of good ſenſe, than to other cauſes; as is proved by her having ſtruggled more for others than for herſelf, more from negative than from poſitive views, or elſe through the impulſe of a private junto rather than of a public ſyſtem. For this, leſs thanks are due to herſelf, than to the ſolitary rivalſhip of Great-Britain, and to the terrors inſpired into Europe by her former madneſs.—A few hiſtorical cirumſtances, however, will mark the fact, which is now become of the firſt magnitude; namely, that ſhe has taken part with the *weak* more generally than with the *ſtrong*. She has protected, for example, ſince 1763, the Turks againſt the Ruſſians; ſhe has aided America and the Eaſt-Indies againſt Great-Britain; ſhe has oppoſed (in defiance of family connexions) the ambition of Auſtria reſpecting the Scheldt; and declined to aſſiſt Auſtria, when ſeeking to diminiſh Bavaria, or to force an exchange of it for the Low Countries; ſhe has more than once riſked herſelf to aſſiſt Spain; and if ſhe lately attempted to gain a fixed ſway in Holland, it was at a moment, when we were doing the ſame thing, and when (in conſequence of the ſtate of parties,) Holland was not to be deemed

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an independent power; (though to have made her *really* ſuch, by a better form of government, would perfectly well have accorded with the French ſyſtem, as well as with our own intereſts.) In ſhort, France chiefly ſought *popularity* with Europe, and at laſt acquired it; eſpecially as having in ſeveral inſtances obſerved a *conciliatory* conduct, and a peculiar tone of moderation; and though ſhe wiſhed to aſſume a lead in all political arrangements, yet ſhe generally (to the unwarrantable diſtreſs of her own ſubjects) bore more than her ſhare of the expence of it. In the concluſion, the French government became diſſolved through the ſoftneſs of its own principles.—Let us now obſerve, notwithſtanding the difficulty of obtaining an unprejudiced hearing upon this ſubject, what aſpect it is that the preſent revolution in France bears to what may be called the *foreign affairs of Europe*. And here even the triumvirate muſt allow that the popular party at leaſt deſire to *ſee every nation rendered free;* and it will be difficult to deny alſo, that they wiſh to aboliſh wars between nations, and eſpecially a ſyſtem of conqueſts; as likewiſe to eſtabliſh liberal principles as to citizenſhip and toleration, and even as to freedom of trade (when their circumſtances ſhall become propitious to it;) alſo to improve every faculty of their country by internal efforts; and to honour and promote, in every reſpect, the uſeful arts and ſciences. Theſe principles are frequently obſcured by intemperance, by intrigue, and other momentary cauſes; but every perſon verſed in the character and modern writings of the French, eſpecially by means of a recent reſidence in France, muſt acknowledge the exiſtence and influence of them; and as to thoſe who would point out the hiſtory of Avignon and of the Comtat, as contradictory to them, I refer to Poland, Bavaria, the Scheldt, the Crimea,

Crimea, and even to the preſent attack upon France, for counter-documents.—I maintain, therefore, that the *preſent* popular government of the French is far more ſuited to the preſervation of the *independence of nations*,* than the military conſpirators in the triumvirate, who certainly are more than upon a par with the modern French in the deſire of ſpreading *their forms of government* over foreign nations; for while the one ſet of theſe propagators uſes the *pen*, the other uſes the *ſword;* of which not only Poland at two different periods, but Sweden, Holland, and Liege, exhibit recent and unequivocal examples.

But it will be ſaid here, perhaps, that allowing the incidental merit of France as contributing to form a *bulwark againſt ambitious potentates*, yet foreign interference is become neceſſary to reſtore it to its proper government, and to its means of action.—But yielding for a moment to this objection, ſurely it does not mean that the *triumvirate* are the proper parties to be employed either to force or to woo France into meaſures which are neceſſary to *counteract their own inordinate power and pretenſions*. Such a miſſion, with perſonages ſo little diſpoſed to play the humble or the generous part of *ſic vos non vobis*, is prepoſterous.—If foreign aſſiſtance, therefore, is neceſſary to the preſervation of the French conſtitution, we have choſen inſtruments, whoſe object will only be to plunder it of a part of its power, and to render null or to debauch the remains of it. Conſequently the triumvirate, whether they pretend to coerce or to mediate among the French, are acting in a poſt where they may do infinite miſchief to Europe, and

* Much time and various events occurred between the date of this letter and the decrees of November and December following.

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where, therefore, it is our urgent intereſt to defeat them. —But what then, it will be ſaid, is to be done with France at the preſent moment? This is a queſtion beſt to be anſwered after a ſhort ſtatement of its ſituation.

The *many* in France are, either by enthuſiaſm, by intereſt, by hope, or by fear, on the ſide of the revolution; or are attached to the indiviſibility, to the national independence, and to the glory of France; or elſe are perſuaded that no free conſtitution can be expected from thoſe powers who perſecute liberty both at *home* and *abroad*, whom ſolemn recent treaties cannot bind againſt their intereſts, and who will govern France upon no other principles than thoſe of intereſt, of reſentment, of ſuſpicion, of the ſword, and of foreign dependence. The *many* in France are in general led by men originally unknown to the rich and foreigners, and therefore deſpiſed by both; but who are not on this account men the leſs powerful or active. Their party is ſupported in a certain ſenſe, as well by thoſe who are neutral, as by thoſe who differ from them; for both pay their taxes to them, and co-operate with them upon emergencies for preſerving internal order and ſecurity. They are already in poſſeſſion of ſo much of the government, that it is eaſy, ſhould treachery ever call for it, to control the reſt of it. They cover the ſoil of France, and are therefore maſters of the landed eſtates of all thoſe, who chooſe to differ from them. They can annually ſtop the iſſuing of more than fifteen millions ſterling, deſtined to pay the national engagements, the non-juring clergy, penſions, reimburſements of ſuppreſſed offices, &c. &c. and they may uſe the whole amount of it, in caſe of diſtreſs, to ſupport their own cauſe. In the acting army, they have 100,000 national guards true to them, with all the privates and all the non-commiſſioned officers

officers of the troops of the line, and a conſiderable proportion of the commiſſioned officers. The want of military diſcipline in their forces is nearly over, or exiſts more with their officers than with their men; and, as theſe officers cannot deſert twice, if the popular party paſs the preſent criſis, they will poſſeſs an army devoted throughout to their principles. As to their number of forces, it is nearly ſufficient, or will ſoon become ſo; for, independent of reinforcements, as ſoon as the plan of the enemy for the campaign becomes declared, many of their uſeleſs garriſons will be drafted to take the field. The eaſe with which a populous territorial country, and I may now add an entirely military one, carries on a *defenſive* war upon its frontiers and within it, againſt an enemy which ſupports itſelf from an immenſe diſtance, is known from hiſtory; and may be remembered alſo from the reſiſtance which the Turkiſh frontiers offered during many months againſt the combined forces of Ruſſia and Auſtria.—For theſe and other reaſons, which it would be here tedious to enumerate, I am of opinion, that the French will not *in the end* ſurrender their revolution to foreign armies, filled with deſcriptions of troops given to plunder, devaſtation, and cruelty, in a degree which their officers cannot reſtrain; and whoſe proceedings therefore being fully detailed and even exaggerated in newſpapers now read in every corner of France, will exaſperate a nation far too great to be intimidated.—As to anarchy or treachery (which too often have a common ſource,) great evils of this ſort, where intentions are ſincere in the many, commonly bring their own remedy; and if the King, therefore, (whoſe perſonal ſafety depends upon his fidelity to the conſtitution,) were at this moment to chooſe an able miniſtry, *ſuited to the temper of the*

the times, the face of things would probably inſtantly change; while on the other hand, the longer this is delayed, the more will he have to ſacrifice.—But if all theſe conjectures reſpecting the fate of France in her *unaſſiſted* attempts to retain her revolution, are unfounded, ſtill we ſhall have to inquire whether a remedy cannot be applied even to *this* evil.—And in the mean time, I muſt deprecate the opinion, that it is for our intereſt to ſee the triumvirate *waſting itſelf* in an attack upon France;—for we muſt truſt nothing to hazard, ſince France in a ſtate of divided opinions may very poſſibly prove unable to reſiſt the enemy, when aided by rebels and traitors on one ſide, and the inactive ſtate of ſome of her citizens on the other.—In this caſe, if Great-Britain looks to the *then* poſition of *foreign affairs*, ſhe will find that France being thus confeſſedly out of the queſtion, the burthen of maintaining the neceſſary poiſe of Europe will fall wholly upon herſelf, as an inceſſant, expenſive, dangerous, and perhaps unavailing care; and that inſtead of gaining, ſhe will loſe by France being blotted out of the ſyſtem of Europe.—And even if ſhe looks to France, conſidered as a *rival*, ſhe will find her in this view emancipated by a bankruptcy from the load of debt which hitherto has always fettered her, and which now operates in ſome degree as a pledge for pacific ſyſtems; and ſhe will find France ſupported in all her future projects by the triumvirate, to whom ſhe will by the ſuppoſition, by this time have fallen as an appendage.—There is another danger poſſible to us from the perſecuted ſtate of France, which is, that finding itſelf become the antipathy of all monarchs, it may in turn reject them all, and found for itſelf a great republic; which, as being born in arms, may become ſtill more military than the late monarchy,

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and therefore prove more of a rival to us in our mutual tranſactions.—But let us now conclude, after all theſe preliminary reflections, with a few hints as to practice.

Nearly *half* of the moſt military part of Europe having united under three neighbouring arbitrary Princes, to diſpoſe of the Government, and apparently of the territory, but certainly of the *alliances* of nearly another *quarter* of it; and the treaty for this purpoſe being *recently* made with a view to their powerful common intereſt, and being by its nature incapable of ſucceſs, unleſs purſued with vigour to the end of it, and in the conduct of it only three *chiefs* being to be conſulted; ſuch a treaty I ſay, being of far more efficacy than any ordinary treaties, it remains to be conſidered, what conduct is to be purſued reſpecting it by Great-Britain, whoſe population, joined to that of Ireland, forms about one *eleventh* part of that of Europe.—The firſt obſervation which preſents itſelf, is of a negative nature; namely, that we ourſelves ought not to concur in any degree, in aſſiſting ſo dangerous an enterpriſe; and eſpecially too, only upon the call of an ally; (for, as Pruſſia only acts upon this occaſion upon grounds perfectly open to every power in Europe, if Great-Britain has not choſen to come forwards under theſe principles in a primary character, ſtill leſs reaſon is there, that ſhe ſhould be implicated in them in a ſecondary one.) 2°. Another obſervation (which is alſo negative) carries us a ſtep farther; for we may affirm, that it is imprudent (a hint which Miniſters will underſtand*) to

* Mr. Chauveſin having about this time deſired, that the acceſſion of any more of our allies to the league might be prevented by Great-Britain; Lord Grenville anſwered firſt, that the independence of foreign Sovereigns was to be reſpected; and next, that peace (a favour that was *not aſked* of us) could not be mediated, without the ſeveral belligerent parties ſhould themſelves manifeſt a diſpoſition towards it.

renounce

renounce all right of interfering reſpecting the triumvirate and its dependents; (and leaſt of all, with ſuch of our *allies*, as are concerned in it, who, as being allies, are in ſome degree reſponſible to us). In politics, the infidelity of Princes renders every part of their foreign conduct matter of attention to their neighbours, there being in fact nothing private in politics, except matters of *internal Government* (which yet are preciſely what the *triumvirate are meddling with in Poland and in France*). Beſides; the ground of the renunciation in queſtion is in direct oppoſition to the menaces uſed by ourſelves, a ſhort time ſince (in conjunction with *Pruſſia*), againſt Ruſſia and Auſtria, when acting againſt the Turks. 3°. We ought to prevent, if poſſible, any new acceſſion to the ſtrength of the triumvirs; either by the junction of Holland to it; or of the German ſtates, or of Spain, Sweden, or other Powers; for which purpoſe little more will be neceſſary, than a wiſe and vigorous repreſentation of arguments; and it is impoſſible that this can come from a more weighty quarter, than that of Great-Britain; both on account of her preſent eminent ſituation, which will give a ſort of faſhion to her advice; and alſo, ſince, from the advice being favourable to France, it carries with it every mark of being diſintereſted and ſincere. But, 4°. we ought not only to prevent any addition of ſtrength to the triumvirate, but endeavour to decompoſe this mighty maſs of miſchief. The firſt party to apply to for this purpoſe, is Pruſſia; becauſe, we have the moſt arguments to uſe there, and the moſt right to employ them; eſpecially, as the ultimate conſequence to Pruſſia, of an union with theſe powers, may be a future war with both, or at leaſt with one of them; to ſupport her in which our aſſiſtance may be looked to, but neceſſarily ſo in vain. Every peril of her ſituation ſhould, therefore, be an-

nounced to her in the moſt energetic terms; for what can a puiſne ally expect from two more powerful, and therefore falſe aſſociates? and how can ſhe procure for herſelf juſtice, when they chooſe to diſagree with *her*? or when they diſagree with one another, how can ſhe avoid taking part with one of them, to preſerve the balance?—Nor ſhould any ſimulated meaſures, and much leſs any wily language on the part of Pruſſia, make us forget, that were ſhe even at the outſet, ſincere; yet ſhe has got into company by whom ſhe is expoſed to be over-reached, or ſeduced at every ſtep; and conſequently, that we have nothing to truſt to for her fidelity, but deciſive actions not to be revoked. Were ſhe indeed wiſe, ſhe would be pleaſed with our affording her an opportunity for treading back her ſteps, and again returning to her old ſituation, which was ſo ſafe and ſo eaſy to be underſtood; eſpecially, as nothing done in France by a *foreign* force is likely, by the nature of things, to be laſting; nor will the National Aſſembly be diſpoſed to ratify an inglorious peace, but ſhew the *inflexibility in times of danger, common to large bodies*; pride (as was exemplified in the Roman Senate, the American Congreſs, and the Conſtituent Aſſembly) becoming contagious, each man's preſence inſpiring the other both with pretenſions and with courage. —Even Auſtria may be told of the perſonal danger of the King and Queen of France, with that of their children; and the probability of a conſequent utter alienation of France towards her, in caſe of accidents; as well as of the dangers ariſing from the power of Ruſſia, which is becoming ſo rapidly preponderating, that the peace of Auſtria, as well as that of Europe, requires, that a *ſpeedy*, (and if poſſible, a ſpontaneous) *diviſion of the Ruſſian territories* ſhould take place between the iſſue of the preſent Em-

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preſs.—As to the Empreſs of Ruſſia, ſhe is of an underſtanding and temper, perfectly capable of entering into dignified and prudent meaſures, when properly propoſed to her. In this great object of repreſentation, therefore, other powers of Europe muſt be anxiouſly urged to concur with every poſſible degree both of warmth and ſpeed, as concerning themſelves ſtill more nearly than us, who by diſtance, by inſular ſituation, and by ſtrength, are better (though ſtill too little) protected againſt the danger. 5°. The power of the Turks, now faſt extinguiſhing itſelf, muſt, if practicable, to a certain degree be renovated; not by half, but by fundamental meaſures, managed through the co-operation of Great-Britain and France. The force of ſtates, *cæteris paribus*, depends upon their civil and military inſtitutions; and though it may be difficult to change the Turkiſh civil inſtitutions, yet a change in their military ones may, perhaps, be more practicable. For inſtance, as the Turks have ſufficient funds, cannot they be engaged to receive twelve or fifteen thouſand European infantry and cavalry into their pay, which, when kept united in one corps, may be ſufficiently numerous to anſwer for its own protection; and from ſuch a corps, might not diſcipline be propagated through other corps of native troops? Theſe, or equivalent meaſures, planned with precaution, and purſued with vigour (however novel), might probably be ſucceſsful, and prevent the Ruſſians and Auſtrians from acquiring a command ſo critical, as that of the neareſt *paſſages of the Eaſt*. Many politicians at one time ſeemed reconciled to the diſmemberment of Turkey, from the hope that humanity would gain by it; but the ſyſtem of the triumvirate ſhews, that, without perhaps benefiting Turkey, the meaſure might be ruinous to Europe. 6°. Every facilitation ſhould be given to the concerns of the Poles and of the French, with

reſpect to arms and other neceſſaries, and alſo with reſpect to Swiſs auxiliaries.—And as to the French, the moſt generous exertions ſhould be uſed to procure an union, if poſſible, of all her citizens in her defence, or at leaſt to obtain the neutrality of the diſcontented. In this work alſo, we ſhould demand the co-operation of others.—As likewiſe, *Laſtly*, in preparing, in caſe of neceſſity, to enforce our repreſentations; for if peaceable arguments ſhall be found wanting in effect, the dangerous and guilty intentions of the triumvirate will *then become eſtabliſhed beyond the poſſibility of doubt*; and none in that caſe will be ſo infatuated, as not to ſee that they muſt be vigorouſly reſiſted.——As a compenſation for theſe aids afforded to France, there is no doubt that the moſt advantageous terms might be obtained in the way of a *treaty* from her, and that a foundation might be laid for an oblivion of all paſt enmities, and for a mutually pacific, and even beneficial conduct in future.

The *variation of ſyſtem* here propoſed with regard to France, will not be attributable to Great-Britain, but to thoſe who have created the *neceſſity* for it; for a change of enemies muſt naturally cauſe a change of intereſts, and therefore of allies. This cannot be new in politics. Accordingly, ſince 1756, there is not one active power of Europe, which has not ſhifted its principal ally more than once, and ſome twice, or oftener.—Conteſts for minor objects are highly criminal; but if we did right lately in countenancing the German league formed againſt Auſtria; and if formerly the wars about ſucceſſions, as well as the wars for the Proteſtant intereſt, and thoſe for the balance of power, (or, in other words, for the liberties and independence of European nations), were any of them in the leaſt degree defenſible; ſurely the preſent is more than a parallel occaſion, as comprehending the

the motives of all of them.—But remonſtrance alone will be neceſſary upon this occaſion, and by no means war.—In the mean time, it muſt be obſerved, that we have no concern in all this with the democratic principles of France; nor do we at all take into queſtion its internal government, farther than to ſeek by friendly means to reſtore to it its unity; and thus to enable it to reſume its poſt as one of the protectors of Europe againſt the return of that *univerſal monarchy* in others, which it knows by experience that it cannot either acquire or retain for itſelf.—Others may beſtow what reproaches they pleaſe upon the Conſtitution of France; but this is not the place to diſcuſs them, as we are ſpeaking of national and not of domeſtic politics, of foreign and not of home concerns: but if the Revolution of France be really an evil, ſtill it becomes us to extract all the good out of it which circumſtances permit; for if we wiſh to avoid Scylla, we muſt ſtill remember that there is a danger in Charybdis.—A little effort uſed at preſent, therefore, will unite the weſtern againſt the eaſtern ſide of Europe, and by ſo doing ſave us much trouble hereafter.—But it is indiſpenſable that the Auſtrians and Pruſſians ſhould quit France, even for the ſake of the quiet of France itſelf; for it is their approach which has cauſed the preſent ferment of parties in it; and as we cannot anſwer for the conduct of the triumvirs, nor they indeed for their own, we ſhould take care, as they are not likely to do good, that they ſhould do no harm.—But how inconſiſtent is it to ſuppoſe that the ſame parties who enter Poland on the eaſt, with the deſign of dethroning an innocent king, diſſolving a cheriſhed government, and dividing a territory to which they have no pretenſion whatever, in ſpite of a treaty; ſhould enter France to the weſtward, with the laudable and oppoſite motive of fortifying the throne, or-

ganizing a conſtitution, and preventing the diſmemberment of the country, notwithſtanding one of the invaders has ancient claims to a very large diſtrict of it.—What indeed muſt the principles of thoſe potentates be, to go no farther, who in a whole nation ſee but a ſingle man?

Since much depends upon the conduct of France *within itſelf*, and this paper will perhaps be read by ſome in that country, I preſume reſpectfully to direct a word or two to its attention.—It appears to me, that the preſent diviſions of France, have chiefly become important from a ſingle fundamental cauſe, namely, the approach of an enemy officiouſly pretending to unite them. In this ſtate of things, luke-warm miniſters had neglected to provide a ſufficiency of muſquets, clothing, and recruits for the army; many ſuſpicious perſons were alſo promoted, or elſe were ſuffered to remain in every department, particularly in the military and in the foreign; next, the naval ſyſtem was all but annihilated; certain incidents likewiſe about the court, to which I ſhall not farther allude, gave ſymptoms of evil counſellors exiſting in its neighbourhoood; and laſtly, the obſtinacy of the ariſtocracy appeared to be demonſtrated from the number of military men, ſlightly taking and ſlightly breaking the civic oath, and from many eccleſiaſtical perſons more honourably not taking it at all.—The danger thus becoming preſſing, the popular party exclaimed, that they were betrayed, and inſiſted upon Miniſters in whom they could confide. The rigid conſtitutionaliſts on the other hand, aſſerted that the King was privileged as to his choice. The popular party however contending that the letter of the conſtitution ought not to deſtroy its ſpirit, ſought an opportunity either of adding to the conſtitution, or elſe of ſuperſeding a part of it, as a matter not only warranted

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by the public ſafety, but called for by the national voice. —If this ſtate of things be true, what can be the natural remedy (as before mentioned), beſides an honeſt, but *popular* Miniſtry? I hope that this remedy will not be applied too late; and that the King will have the firmneſs to adopt it cheerfully. He has certainly excellent intentions; and after having deliberately adopted the conſtitution, he will doubtleſs adhere to it; recollecting thoſe noble words of his predeceſſor John of France, when returning to his captivity, unable to releaſe himſelf from the conditions of it: "If truth and juſtice (ſaid he) are "baniſhed from the earth, the laſt place in which they "ſhould be found, is in the mouths and in the hearts of "princes." The preſent is no longer the time for indeciſive meaſures. Too much is done by the King, for any of it to be retracted. His perſon is in hazard; and even if his perſon were ſafe, the Auſtrians and Pruſſians, in caſe of final victory, would only uſe him for their own advantage, rob him of a part of his territory, depopulate the reſt of it, or leave in it the ſeed of eternal revolt and civil war. Let him then join his people, and drive out the enemy.—Some moſt reſpectable conſtitutionaliſts have lately unfortunately compromiſed themſelves upon ſeveral occaſions, and upon ſome, where men might fairly have been of two opinions; but the virtue of their intentions being univerſally known to Europe, their merit will ſoon be re-acknowledged in France, and perhaps, by a ſpeedy act of oblivion; for it is impoſſible to think that ſuch men can mean to ſheath a parricide ſword in the bowels of their country. They will ſoon perceive that the diſorders of France are to be treated not by a hot, but by a cool regimen, and that they require time rather than an exaſperating oppoſition. They will never ſacrifice the reputation of their paſt lives, or even that ac-

quired during the revolution, by a peeviſh conduct; but poſſeſſed of true magnanimity, they will patiently look for a ſettlement of things to the good ſenſe of France itſelf, which *(after the example of America)* may ſucceed in two or three years in a ſecond attempt at good government, even if they fail at preſent in the firſt. In ſhort, they will never conſign France, on account of their perſonal feelings or even of their perſonal intereſts (both of which good men are bound to ſacrifice to their country) to an interminable ſcene of diſcord and woe, in conſequence of a long foreign and civil war, in which more miſchief may be done in a ſingle hour, and be again and again repeated, than has yet occurred through the whole French revolution. In ſhort, they will never be ſo devoid of ſenſe and foreſight, as to concur with the armies of two powers, of which one has a ſort of *title* to be the enemy of France as being the claimant of its ancient territory, and both of which have recently diſclaimed all thoſe principles by which they can pretend to prove themſelves its friends. How happy is it, that the fate of Poland has been *twice* exhibited, to open the eyes of France, *before the commencement of its own ſtruggle!*—But if ſacrifices are expected on one ſide in France, improvements ought to be made on the other; particularly with regard to the *dignity of the Aſſembly*, which is daily committed in a manner ſo exceſſively impolitic and diſguſting, that it is impoſſible that it can be uſeful to any party, except that which intends the public ruin, and which is ſold to the enemy, either domeſtic or foreign.—As to thoſe, who wiſh a change of the *reigning dynaſty*, I hope they are too few to require to be addreſſed, eſpecially if the King acts with an early deciſion towards the public.—With reſpect to the *republican* party, let them have the goodneſs to reflect on the following brief hints: In France, republicaniſm has many

violent

violent opponents; in France, there is however a temper eſtabliſhed, which will not long tolerate a bad king. As far as œconomy is concerned, the expences of a king are leſs than thoſe of a war, civil and foreign. Surely then it cannot be worth riſquing every thing and in any event throwing every thing into confuſion, for the mere *difference of happineſs* (for this is all which is at ſtake) between a republic and a well organized monarchy. Europe likewiſe has now heard *enough of theoretical principles*, perhaps enough to doubt of the value of them; and therefore in order to aid its conviction, it now requires to ſee a little of *examples;* ſo that it is incumbent to give to it an example (in *that* country, which has the beſt opportunity) both of the practicability and of the bleſſings of a free government, particularly as to internal improvements. It is ſurely inconſiſtent in thoſe, who pretend to have nothing in view but the happineſs of man, and who boaſt that there is a fraternity to be obſerved between nations, not to conſider the ſufferings of *other* nations; whoſe cauſe has loſt much more by the late extravagant conduct of French patriots, than it gained by the firſt impulſe from the French revolution; reforms in general, for example, being now dreaded not only by princes, but by *nations themſelves;* for it is to the late exaggerated conduct of the French that are owing the rejection of all reform in England, as well as the ſeverity of certain late reſtrictions impoſed in foreign countries, with the new attack upon Poland, and the preſent invaſion of France itſelf. If the only reſult therefore of puſhing this queſtion at preſent, is to put all reforms to riſque throughout Europe, and to make a few men raſh to their own coſt, and more men timid to the public injury; it appears the dictate both of wiſdom and benevolence to render the *more valuable part* of the revolution ſecure, and to leave all refinements

finements of it to the future operation of *general* opinion, inſtead of reſorting to forced and diſquieting intrigues. The conſtitution of France has about it both a name and ſufficient merits to render it a point for rallying, and to make it, in ſhort, the pole ſtar for all; whereas allowing the value of a republican government to be as great as is aſcribed to it by its favourers, it muſt be remembered, that there are different forms of it, and that even among its favourers no form is yet fairly agreed upon, and that even when agreed upon, it will require time to eſtabliſh it in practice.

Let me now end this long political diſcuſſion with two remarks, by way of retroſpect to it.—Firſt, I deſire to be conſidered throughout, as wiſhing not to uſe the ſtile of prophecy, more than is fitting. Where men muſt act, they muſt endeavour to anticipate, and they may be miſtaken in doing it; but the reaſoning I have uſed as to the Concert of Princes, admits of wide limits; for I have not found it neceſſary to argue ſo much on what is *probable*, as on what is *poſſible*; and I have done ſo neceſſarily, ſince, as a wiſe man uſed to obſerve, "Politicians act "commonly with ſo little ſyſtem, that it becomes diffi- "cult at any criſis to ſay what will be their next mea- "ſure."

The other remark regards my own perſonal politics; and here I beg to lay claim to the obſervance of a ſtrict neutrality.—If I am aſked, therefore, what I think of the late meaſures of our Adminiſtration as to Ruſſia? I anſwer, that I have always conceived that Ruſſia was uſeful to us by her trade, but dangerous to us by her power, and often ſo by her politics; that the Miniſtry were in general right in oppoſing Ruſſian politics, but choſe a wrong moment for it, after Sweden had quitted the conteſt;

teſt; that they ſtruggled at the peace about an inadequate object; and did not afterwards ſeem to defend their proceedings upon grounds ſufficiently extenſive.

I here then take my leave of the public, truſting that I have made it clear with reſpect to their intereſt, that the good underſtanding of the triumvirs with one another, is dangerous to the peace of Europe, which requires for its ſafety the exiſtence of many equal and diſconnected powers; and that I have alſo proved, with reſpect to myſelf, that although I have manifeſted warm feelings, I am yet

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTER III.

ON THE CONCERT OF PRINCES.

Publiſhed Auguſt 2, 1793.

SIR,

IT is not with apologies for inaccuracies, either of ſtile, or of the tranſcriber's pen, that I ſhall trouble you, particularly as a republication of theſe letters will ſhortly appear; but it is my duty to ſtate, that haſte has cauſed me to *omit* ſome eſſential obſervations. One or two ſhall now be mentioned;—but I ſhall firſt remark, that a little time will ſoon remove all doubts as to the ſtatement I have made of the population belonging to the powers combined againſt Poland and France, under the name of the *Concert of Sovereigns*; a name, of itſelf ſufficient to excite alarm, both as implying novelty, and that Sovereigns are every thing, and their people nothing.

Sardinia,

Sardinia, like a ſmaller ſtream, that lends its aid to ſwell devouring torrents, is now preparing to reinforce the triumvirate of Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia; and to raiſe the number of their dependents in the minds even of ſcrupulous politicians, to the full complement of ſixty millions of ſouls.—The ſubtle power juſt mentioned, has always purſued an ambitious ſyſtem, under its different Princes. Imitating a crafty vulture, it has conſtantly deſcended from its poſt upon the hills, into the plain, whenever the moving camps of warriors have promiſed any prey to it. Its ſhare of this has generally been conſiderable, and it will not at preſent be at all the leſs, for being extracted out of an ally.—I ſhall offer ſeveral important remarks upon the conſequences of this event, ſhould it take place. They are as follows: 1°. Any addition made to Sardinia out of France, when joined to a farther defalcation of the German Provinces and of French Flanders, in favour of Auſtria, will cut off a complete border from the whole *Eaſtern* territory of France; which will not only leſſen the French domain conſiderably, but as conſiderably add to the territories of powers already too formidable. 2°. It is perhaps of ſtill more importance to remember, that ſuch a change will ſtrip France of its preſent excellent frontier to the Eaſt, conſiſting of mountains, rivers, and fortreſſes; all which may be transferred to the common enemies of itſelf and of Great-Britain, ſo as to leave France hereafter more tempted to join than to oppoſe the Concert of Princes; or, in any event, more incapable both of offenſive and defenſive operations reſpecting it. The importance of a guarded frontier is eaſily made apparent, by conſidering what would be the ſituation of the Britiſh empire, in its preſent *internal* defenceleſs ſtate, if Great-Britain and Ireland were, by a miracle, ſuddenly to be made contiguous

to

to a hoſtile continent, by the diſappearance of our rampart of ſea and of navy. 3°. It is of conſiderable conſequence to remark, that to render Sardinia in any degree ſtronger than it is at preſent, will be to render Switzerland, Italy, and the ſmaller German States, in a like proportion weaker; and thence to open new changes to the balance of Europe; beſides the danger ariſing from the poſſible appearance of a new *naval* power in Sardinia. 4°. Whether it is proper for England to wiſh to reſtore the family of Count d'Artois to the line of the French ſucceſſion, when the throne of France may *thence* be *joined* at ſome period or other with the hereditary poſſeſſion of Sardinia, I ſhall not here inquire; but none can deny, that every addition to Sardinia taken from Switzerland, Italy, or Germany, will in *ſuch* an event, become an addition to the power of France; and therefore be inconſiſtent with our preſent narrow ideas reſpecting the natural rivalſhip between ourſelves and that country.—I ſhall take my leave of Sardinia with *one other* obſervation. Who is there, that viewing things with the eye of humanity, can wiſh Switzerland, for example, to be wreſted from its own ſelf-government, and placed under the rule of Sardinia; whoſe ſubjects, and even whoſe Miniſters, are kept with the ſtrictneſs of boys in their ſchooling hours; and with whom military oppreſſions, and crowds of melancholy eccleſiaſtics, form an odious compound of political and clerical tyranny?—Let us next ſay a few words reſpecting *Pruſſia* and Poland.

The natural policy of *Pruſſia* was evidently to adhere to the German league which ſhe herſelf had formed; as likewiſe to re-eſtabliſh Poland, and to concur in the reverſionary gift of it to Saxony; and, laſtly, to ſeparate rather than to unite Ruſſia and Auſtria, to give alſo a certain degree of ſtrength and ſyſtem to the Turks, and re-inſtate

re-inſtate France upon principles adverſe to Auſtria and friendly to herſelf.—Much of this was already in train; but Pruſſia choſe to quit a ſafe ſyſtem, in which ſhe *bore the lead*, for a perilous and intricate one, where her part is *ſubordinate*, and at the ſame time contrary both to her engagements and to conſiſtency. But unhappily, conqueſts ſeemed to glitter in her new courſe; and perhaps the proſpect flattered her the more, as it gave her ample room for intrigue.—Let us recite ſome of theſe intrigues. She checked a negotiation between Poland and the Turks; and in this, injured *two of her natural* allies. Upon the condition of receiving an equivalent out of Auſtria, ſhe conſented that Auſtria ſhould pillage the Turks; which amounted to a pillage of Turkey by her own hands.—She pretended to negotiate a Commercial Treaty with Poland, her obſervance of which would be in her own breaſt; but ſhe required it to be accompanied by the ceſſion of Dantzic and Thorn; which being refuſed, ſhe retracted the demand, and ſuffered the treaty to die away. Poland was on the point of making arrangements with Ruſſia; but Pruſſia checked the progreſs of them, under the pretence of aiding her in her new Conſtitution, and of protecting her by the falſe pledge of her *own* alliance.—She raiſed the hopes of Saxony alſo, with reſpect to Poland, and then diſappointed them.—She employed Great-Britain to recommend to Poland the ceſſion of Dantzic and Thorn, whereby we became ſuſpected to Poland; and ſhe made uſe of us to threaten Ruſſia, but *ſuffered it to be underſtood*, that we acted herein the part of a principal againſt Ruſſia, rather than at her requeſt.—I am juſtified therefore, when I ſay, that Pruſſia proceeds upon a ſyſtem weak with reſpect to herſelf, and hazardous towards her allies; and that if ſhe perſiſts in it, ſhe may be a ſource of weakneſs, rather than of ſtrength to us.

It

It is difficult to explain the conduct of Pruſſia upon any prudent ground, except that of her fear of ſuffering from the too ſtrict union of Poland and Saxony; who might thence be ſuppoſed to hold the ſheers capable at ſome future period, of cutting the thread of her own deſtiny.—But has ſhe avoided danger by placing herſelf between Ruſſia and Auſtria; and will not Pruſſia and Sardinia, the two *junior kingdoms* in Europe, have reaſon to rue the ſucceſs of the only two *Imperial*, and therefore the proudeſt, potentates in Europe; and will not this ill-matched alliance be likely to meet the fate, which commonly attends *unequal friendſhips*, whether in public or in private life? Will not both of theſe ſmaller powers only be ſuffered to fatten, previous to their ſlaughter?—But might not Pruſſia have pacified her fears as to the danger alluded to, by alliances in other parts; or by family connexions with the Saxon dynaſty, which might have united the two crowns in one common iſſue; or by a ſolemn treaty with Poland, which as being *national*, rather than perſonal, might have ſtood a better chance of being obſerved, eſpecially as being bottomed upon common intereſts; or laſtly, by negotiating an exchange of the Saxon dominions, for ſome of the Eaſtern parts of thoſe of Pruſſia; (who, if ſhe had by this means transferred *Sileſia*, with its diſputed title, to the Saxon family, might have got rid of the burthen of maintaining the validity of her claims over it?)—But as there was no danger more preſſing, or of greater magnitude than that, on the ſide of Ruſſia and Auſtria, ſo there was no danger which required more deciſive meaſures to be taken, in ſpite of trifling future hazards, (which might in the end change their nature, and become even advantages).—In any event, however, there was no part which could be *leſs ſafe*, than for a King, with ſo few reſources as the Pruſſian Monarch,

Monarch, to be running about the Low Countries and France, with Pruſſia, as it were, upon his back: an experiment, which one would have thought, had proved ſufficiently fatal in the hands of Charles XII. of Sweden, and of the Athenians when attacking Sicily, to be a warning againſt its repetition by Pruſſia.

But whatever is the part which might have been *wiſeſt for Pruſſia* to have adopted, it is enough that the ſtep which ſhe has taken, is ſufficiently unadviſable and hazardous, for *us* to inſiſt upon her abandoning either *that*, or our alliance.—I ſhould not do juſtice to my own feelings, if I ſuffered it to be ſuſpected, that I undervalued the Pruſſian connexion. While the ambition of princes remains predominant over their ſenſe of duty and their judgment, alliances may to a certain degree be uſeful to us, if concluded with prudent powers, having a common intereſt with us; but if Pruſſia will change by her proceedings, the whole tablet of Europe, and perſiſt, in ſpite of the remonſtrances which ought to be made to her, in plunging herſelf into diſputes, which may eventually ruin her; it ſeems ſelf-evident that it will not be wiſe for us ever to riſque a *preſent* war, for the ſake of an ally to aſſiſt us in a *future* war, when the return of the favour is made ſo very problematical.—Beſides, Pruſſia ought to ſtate our check upon this occaſion, as a fair excuſe to Auſtria, for abandoning her preſent enterprizes.—Nor is there any thing in her *oſtenſible* engagements, as a party in the Concert of Princes, which can make this meaſure difficult. Auſtria has confeſſed, that the ſubject of indemnities due to the ſmaller German Powers was an eaſy matter of compromiſe; which muſt hold no leſs true of thoſe due to the Pope. Nothing then would remain, but the cauſe of the *Crown*, or *King* of France; but if I am right, that it is in the power of ourſelves and Pruſſia to incline the

King

King of France to chooſe a *popular* miniſtry, the whole pretence for foreign hoſtile interference would ceaſe.—It is eaſy to prove this. The popular party in France have proceeded upon two data, ſimple in themſelves, but which render conſequent their whole conduct; the firſt of which is, that they have a right to ſave their Conſtitution by means exiſting in, or even out of it; and ſecondly, that the King of France has perſons about him, who give cauſe to ſuſpect, that the Executive Power will not co-operate with them. A popular adminiſtration obviates every difficulty, by removing every ſuſpicion, and admitting every exertion; eſpecially, if at the ſame time, England produced a ceſſation of hoſtilities, which her extreme influence through Europe would render eaſy; and thus place her upon a very deſerved eminence of popularity, both with France and with Europe, from which ſhe might derive the higheſt advantages.—A moment however is not to be loſt, as things may aſſume very rapidly a direction and impulſe, which we may not be able to obviate, or redreſs.—And would the Emperor ſtand alone againſt France and the reſt of us united? Would he perſiſt in *inſulting* the King of France, by accuſing him of falſehood, in his declarations of *aſſent* (for I need not call it *choice*) in favour of the Conſtitution?—Would not the Concert of Princes fall to the ground, *ipſo facto;* and would not Poland in conſequence, again be reſtored to itſelf and to happineſs; and Pruſſia once more be a power affectionately embraced, both on public and family accounts, by the Britiſh nation.

But this fond proſpect muſt not ſeduce us from ſaying one or two parting words as to *Poland*. For this end, I ſhall remind the public that the firſt diviſion of Poland

happened, (as the King of Pruſſia relates in his poſthumous works,) merely from the deſire of finding a ceſſion *ſuitable to Ruſſia*, which might give leſs umbrage to Auſtria, than thoſe poſſeſſions which Ruſſia thought herſelf entitled to exact from the Turks.—A *caſual* incident led the triumvirate of the day to think of hapleſs Poland; and Poland was inſtantly made the meal to gorge the appetite, not only of Ruſſia who was a claimant; but alſo of Auſtria and Pruſſia, who were only mediators between the parties then at war. As I ſhall at an early day give an account of this ſhameleſs tranſaction, in the *words* of the late King of Pruſſia, I paſs on to a ſecond and concluding remark.—A voluntary ſubſcription is propoſed among us in favour of Poland, ſimilar to that in favour of Corſica; (of Corſica, which has only a ſeventieth part of its population, which certainly was not more unjuſtly perſecuted, and whoſe fate had far leſs influence upon human affairs.) Every individual has an eaſy mode now offered, of bearing teſtimony in his own perſon to diſtreſſed merit, of aſſiſting it by his purſe, of diſcountenancing perſecution by the weight of his name, and of ſhewing to Princes, that let them concert in what manner they pleaſe, there is a public exiſting, whoſe impoſing and dignified majority it will become them to reſpect. Should the ſuccour prove too late to be uſeful in the *field*, the ſanction given by reſpectable men to the undertaking, will aſſiſt the fate of Poland in the negotiation which muſt follow. It is not every day, that private men can do good to nations; or have the ſatisfaction when doing it, of thinking that it muſt indirectly contribute to the ſafety of their own country. In ſhort, there is no way in which a man can render more benefit to Europe and mankind in a private ſtation, than by lending his aid, however ſmall, to the

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cauſe of a ſuffering Cato, and of the nation, whom he is endeavouring to train up in peace, in virtue, and in happineſs.

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTER IV.

Publiſhed Auguſt 6, 1792.

SIR,

THE indignation of mankind will at laſt riſe to a pitch which armies cannot quell.—The *declaration made by the Duke of Brunſwick*, in the name of Auſtria and Pruſſia againſt France, portends death to all its inhabitants (except regular troops) who offer any obſtacle to their forces. And what is their alledged object? The adjuſtment of the claims of the parties diſpoſſeſſioned in the German Provinces of France, and the ceſſation of anarchy.—As the Emperor however four weeks ago ſolemnly declared, that the firſt object little concerned him and was ſuſceptible of eaſy arrangement, I ſhall, after his example, lay it out of the queſtion.

The whole then reſpects the *order of things* in France.—But as the pretence of theſe pious princes in favour of a *religion* which is not profeſſed by the King of Pruſſia or by the Empreſs of Ruſſia, and the coffers of which have been pillaged, and its rights invaded by the Houſe of Auſtria, carries with it its own refutation;—I ſhall only touch upon the deſigns of a *political* nature announced reſpecting France, and the means to be employed for their execution.

The political deſigns announced, are to reſtore the French King to *abſolute power*.—He is, in more than ten paſſages of a ſhort manifeſto, made the ſole fountain of authority; and the allies expreſsly acknowledge no laws whatever in France, but thoſe flowing from *him*. They ſpeak indeed of his promiſes, in favour of the happineſs of his ſubjects; and ſuppoſe it poſſible that he may convene certain bodies near him; but of what nature, they ſay, depends entirely upon himſelf; adding in another place, that they ſhall not intermeddle in the interior government of France.—Such is their benevolent and philoſophic end.

Their means, which are correſponding, are fire and ſword.—If the militia (or national guards) oppoſe them, they are to receive the puniſhment of rebellion; (which is the more remarkable, as half the King of Pruſſia's forces, according to Hertſberg, are of this deſcription.) If the inhabitants at large dare defend themſelves, whether in the field, or under cover, they are to ſuffer inſtant military puniſhment, and their houſes to be deſtroyed. The adminiſtrative bodies are made perſonally reſponſible for all violences which they do not notoriouſly oppoſe in their juriſdiction. All the members of the national aſſembly, and of the adminiſtrative bodies and national guard at Paris, are to anſwer with their lives for all accidents to the King, Queen, and royal family; and in caſe of any ſuch accident, or even of the denial of permiſſion to their going where they pleaſe, an exemplary, and never to be forgotten vengeance is to follow, and the city of Paris is to be delivered up to military execution, and even to total ſubverſion.—Of the rights and liberties of citizens, theſe potentates take no concern; for "*ſubjects*," they ſay, "are bound "to their ſovereigns by the law of nature and of "nations;"

"nations;" of *nature*, though in a ſtate of nature, kings are unknown; and of *nations*, though national law only regulates the concerns between nations. This would be a ſoleciſm therefore in ethics, were correctneſs to be expected from princes, who do not ſtudy the rights of men to preſerve them, but only to know how to control them.—It is another matter alſo of criticiſm, to obſerve tyrants perpetually inſiſting upon the neceſſity of princes being at *liberty*, and of their ſubjects being *diſarmed*, before the former can be bound by any oath to any conſtitution; and yet to find them requiring obedience from a nation towards its prince, as of right, though exacted by force from diſarmed and helpleſs citizens. Surely this is ſetting *mutual* compact wholly at defiance, and implying that nations are made for princes, and not princes for nations.

If the French have only awakened from their ſleep of deſpotiſm, in order that after a momentary trance in the arms of liberty, they may again ſink into oppreſſion, loaded with redoubled chains, it is hard to ſay whether they deſerve moſt of contempt, or of pity. France has imbibed ſo much of a ſenſe of liberty, that nothing but a tyranny within, re-inforced by a tyranny from without, can ſeem ſafe or ſatisfactory to thoſe who ſeek to become its maſters.—It never then can be poſſible for a Fayette, or a Rochefoucauld, to be driven by democratic petulance to embrace ſo foul a monſter, preſented to them without the ſlighteſt diſguiſe. They will rather truſt the chance of returning ſenſe in their own countrymen, or if it were neceſſary, try a republic with all its hazards (and I allow them great, though happily, needleſs to be incurred,) than look for ſecurity and liberty to ſpring out of the tender mercies of military tyranny.—The diſcontented conſtitutionaliſts

ſtitutionaliſts are moſt of them *reſpectable, well-intentioned men;* lovers of their country, and capable of ſacrificing their petty wrongs at its ſhrine, as well as of uniting to preſerve it from immediate horrors from without, and of depending with a generous confidence upon the approaching conſtitutional renewal of the legiſlature for redreſs of what is wrong within.——The allies, therefore, will be foiled. They will, indeed, unite France, but it will be againſt themſelves; they will extinguiſh anarchy, only to revive a conſtitution; and they will reſtore an order to it, which will be oppoſed to their own injuſtice. This is ſure prophecy, for it is the voice of hiſtory.

The manifeſto *diſclaims* all deſign of diſmembering France; but as the language of a manifeſto is always ſuch as will beſt enſure its ſucceſs, it never impoſes upon any but weak perſons; and thoſe muſt be weak *indeed,* who give much credence to it, after recollecting that the Empreſs of Ruſſia who originally pledged herſelf for the indiviſibility of Poland, is now about to tear it into pieces a ſecond time.—But if we grant that the allies are *ſincere in renouncing conqueſts upon France;* there needs little foreſight then to know, that the invaſion of France will ſoon terminate with the firſt obſtacle; that the French King will be complimented with the pretended merit of having oppoſed it; and that the allies will retire to ſolace themſelves with their projected booty in Poland or other quarters. It is unnatural that German powers, who like the Swiſs, never move but for profit, can have engaged in a war without counting its coſt, and without making ſure of their indemnity; and it is impoſſible

impoſſible that powers like Auſtria and Pruſſia, (which never ſee their rivals acquire a pound of earth or a ſingle ſubject, without alarm,) can have viewed the progreſs of the Ruſſians in Poland with ſo much *ſang froid* and complacency, without terms having been definitively concluded between them reſpecting it. Upon the ſuppoſition, therefore, that deſigns upon the territory of France *are* to be abandoned, Poland or ſome other poſſeſſion it is obvious to conceive, will be the "pillow "upon which they will reſt their diſappointments;" —and the ſuppoſition of ſuch abandonment is certainly rendered colourable, when we obſerve the unmanaged and diſguſting terms of the manifeſto, the tranquillity with which the French nation attend their enemy, as well as the little deference ſhewn by the allies to the French emigrants. To theſe conſiderations, let us add the known ſpirit of intrigue of one of the allies, who cannot well be ſuppoſed ſincere in wiſhing to drive back France by force into its old alliance with its rival; and likewiſe the probable anxiety of the two allies, now employed againſt France, to inſpect the critical tranſactions paſſing in Poland.——As to Poland, he muſt be a young politician indeed, who can ſuſpect that a triumvirate who have once diſſected Poland, can have any delicacy about repeating an operation which has paid them ſo well. The Empreſs and Prince Kaunitz *continue* to govern Ruſſia and Auſtria; and Pruſſia, by its abandonment of Poland, has ſhewn, that the preſent monarch will not be more ſcrupulous than the laſt.——Beſides, to the motives for the firſt diviſion are added others which call for a ſecond. I mean, the removal of a benevolent ſovereign from the Poliſh throne, who ſeeks to govern his nation in a manner

ſo much more popular than theſe princes, as to form a dangerous example in their neighbourhood; and who, by ſtrengthening his nation, has probably cauſed a jealouſy, leſt it ſhould ſeek to reclaim its former poſſeſſions; not to omit, that as a war has been thought adviſable to be riſqued againſt France, it might ſeem natural to make one kingdom furniſh the funds for a cruſade againſt the other.

But whatever may be the motives or deſigns of the triumvirs, is of little conſequence to France or to Great-Britain, each of whom muſt *provide* for the worſt, leſt the worſt ſhould happen.——France muſt remember, that military deſpotiſm, when eſtabliſhed, has no controul left to it, but its *own* ſenſe of juſtice; and that this ſenſe of juſtice is conſtantly weakened by the extenſion of its power.——And Great-Britain muſt recollect, that the triumvirs are in too good an underſtanding with one another, for herſelf to be ſafe, while it is ſo eaſy for them, after abandoning all projects upon France, to quarter themſelves not only upon Poland in their centre; but upon Turkey to the right, and upon Germany to the left, (Pruſſia already calling itſelf a *preponderating member of the Germanic body.*)

As to *individuals in France*, who wiſh to chooſe their political principles upon *mere ſpeculation*, we may obſerve to them, that the allies either are, or are not ſincere, in their joint manifeſto.—If either of the allies, and ſtill more, if both of them, are *inſincere* in it, which, from its extravagance (ſo unworthy of grave men,) and from other circumſtances is more than poſſible, the deciſion becomes clear.——If on the other hand, the allies *are* in earneſt, thoſe are not wiſe men who

who range themſelves on the ſide of ſo much folly. The French never will hear with patience from mercenaries, who fight *without any opinions*, that well-intentioned men are to be puniſhed with death, for *defending theirs*. Nor is it in the chance of things, that 150,000 acting troops can conquer 300,000 acting or local ones, occupying fortified poſts, and perpetually augmenting their numbers, if the latter are but true to their cauſe.—If the allies loiter on the frontiers, France is ſafe by delay;—if they undertake a courſe of ſieges, in that caſe autumnal ſickneſs, reſiſtance, or even a ſucceſs which calls for garriſons to ſecure their conqueſts, will equally diſable their progreſs, till winter brings its protection; and if they advance at all hazards, with an enemy in front, in flank, and in rear, and leave no way open for their ſupplies except what depends upon convoys, while the enemy can every where aſſemble forces for *attack*, and every where take ſhelter in fortifications for *defence*, their diſtreſs is no leſs certain. An army which is obliged to *double* the ſtrength of its detachments, when it either occupies a poſt, or ſends out parties for convoys or to forage, on account of the known or *poſſible* hoſtility of a military country, will ſoon be haraſſed and broken down; and the havoc which will be made in the purſuit of every corps which is defeated, where every townſman, every peaſant, and almoſt every woman is an armed enemy, will be another dreadful contingency. Xenophon himſelf, if leading 100,000 men, would find it difficult to *retreat* from ſuch a country, though every ſtep would bring him nearer home; but how he would *advance* in it, even with 150,000 men, when every ſtep lengthened his communications, and augmented both his enemies and his employment for his own troops, I leave to the

Duke

Duke of Brunſwick to anſwer.—To thoſe who *deny* the hoſtility of the country, I reply that a cautious General muſt always reckon upon it, till he finds proof to the contrary; and he has too ſure ground for doing ſo, when he ſees, that with only 15,000 regular troops left in the interior parts of France, rebellion at preſent is no where able to keep its ſtandard flying. But if France is to be deemed only as *neutral*, the enemy (it muſt be allowed) at leaſt will have no *aid* to hope from it; eſpecially as perſons who do not engage in a civil war upon its original principles in the commencement of it, are generally ſooner or later induced to take part in it upon ſecondary ones; and the ſanguinary orders iſſued through the Duke of Brunſwick, (which will be executed to the full letter of them by German free-booters, as far as their power goes,) will not leave them long undecided.—I know indeed that great accumulations of force to the allies, and great deſertions from the popular army are expected, as the war proceeds; as well as great diſaſters to the latter from treachery, and from want of diſcipline. But firſt, as to acceſſions of force, they may happen on both ſides. Next reſpecting deſertions; the French, at preſent experience few, except among their officers, and theſe are leſſening; and it remains to be ſeen, whether the ſtream of deſertion will not turn its courſe, when the victims of *military and civil* tyranny among the Germans, are better acquainted with facts, and find opportunities for eſcaping, eſpecially ſhould they receive any check in their enterprizes. * With regard to experience, more of it is acquired in ſix weeks, in the preſence of an enemy, than in ſix years in barracks; and a de-

* The French afterwards publiſhed premiums to invite deſertion.

fenſive

ſenſive ſyſtem will naturally prolong its opportunities.—The whole, then, for the preſent, centers in the ſingle queſtion of *treachery*, which I acknowledge there is reaſon in ſome inſtances to apprehend; but time will diſcover men's characters; and we muſt remember, that many officers have a peculiar intereſt in the preſent order of things, as having acquired unexpected promotion (even from the loweſt ranks) by the deſertion of their ſuperiors. Beſides; the enthuſiaſtic conduct of the privates and non-commiſſioned officers has been proved under the moſt diſcouraging circumſtances; and *whenever a great army holds together*, truſty officers will not be wanting, fond of obtaining commands in it. Add to this, that the *worſt* which the allies can do, will ſoon be known; and that the firſt pauſe in their progreſs will announce their ruin and confirm every man's fidelity.—As the manifeſto of the *Emigrant Princes* is likely to offer no new ſupplementary matter, either to attract the confidence or to excite the fears of the French nation; the whole ſtands in a ſhort compaſs as follows:—Since the German powers, from the expence of the war, and their little intereſt in it, will not ſupport it long; ſince whenever they retire, the kingdom will reſume its opinions; and ſince, even while they are ſuppoſed to be maſters, great maſſes of people muſt always obtain an amneſty from them; the queſtion is, whether it is better for a prudent Frenchman to ſide with his nation, (which in ſome ſhape or other muſt ſoon acquire order,) and thus to ſecure property and ſituation; or to abandon every thing at home, for a party, which muſt be without reſource and become vagrant, if defeated; and which, if it ſucceeds for the moment, will always have its battles to fight over again?—If the firſt meaſure of joining the nation is

not

not adopted, it will at leaſt appear, that *neutrality* is better than the ſecond meaſure, of joining its enemies.

But a *great perſonage* is ſtill unmentioned, whoſe poſt is of the higheſt importance both to himſelf and others; I mean the King of France, for whoſe cauſe I have long combated in private with a zeal, which, were I near him, would entitle me to addreſs him in the following words—

" Sire, it is by hearing truth, that you can alone be " ſaved from ruin to your perſon, your family, and " your throne. There are two truths, then, of the " utmoſt importance for you to know: the firſt is, that " your nation prefers *things* to *men;* and the next, that " in a time of criſis, *nothing will be truſted to, that is* " *doubtful.* Unfortunately, the perſons who are to " judge of you, are thoſe, who were choſen deputies " at the moment of fever, which was occaſioned by " your endeavour to eſcape. Theſe perſons have ſeen " oaths daily taken, and daily broken by your officers; " and they fear, that the Pope and your Clergy, may " be uſed to explain away your new one. They ſuſpect " your wife (and it is unfortunate when the wife of " Cæſar is ſuſpected;) they ſuſpect her, I ſay, of " Auſtrian attachments. *Her* relations, and thoſe of " yourſelf and of your attendants, fill the camp of the " public enemy.——Under circumſtances like theſe, " that Aſſembly which has moſt weight with the nation, " has little confidence in your Miniſters; and your " Miniſters of late, to ſay the leaſt of them, have not " only failed in every thing, but have purſued an equi- " vocal conduct; and in times of criſis, *doubt will not be* " *ſuffered to exiſt.* The conſtitution tells you, that you " may chooſe your Miniſters; but the ſpirit which made " that conſtitution, ſays, that the conſtitution muſt be

" rendered

" rendered ſafe, when a public enemy is upon its march
" to deſtroy it.——If you do not therefore give to the
" Aſſembly and the Public, the Miniſtry which they
" require, they will have a King and Miniſtry of
" their own, and make their preference for *men* and
" for *things* coincide.—What more to diſtreſs them,
" could happen, than does happen, if you were againſt
" them; and if you and your ſon were aſſaſſinated,
" would it not be in vain that your friends would ſeek
" to replace either of you on your throne?——The
" ſame conteſt in either caſe would remain for the
" popular party, but their conduct of the conteſt would
" become eaſier.

" Alas, Sire, your warmeſt friends are thoſe who
" moſt deceive and injure you. They talk of your
" wrongs, and of a reſentful nation: but *great objects*
" *are only to be known by great ſigns*, and hiſtory alone
" is to be uſed to interpret theſe ſigns. The af-
" fectionate, or perhaps the intereſted ſtatements
" of thoſe who ſurround you, are inaccurate upon
" this ſubject; for France is now managed by the
" *majority* of its *active* men (for whether they are rich
" or not is of no moment, ſince when the minds of
" men are agitated, numbers always control property;)
" and being thus ſelf-governed, what has France done
" to reſent the events of the 20th of June? Diſtruſt,
" Sire, the cold attachment, which waits to declare
" itſelf under the ſhelter of an army; for there are
" armies on *both* ſides.—Trace back rather the hiſtory
" of your danger; and you will ſee in it both its
" cauſes and its cure. At the commencement of this
" aſſembly, a tendency to republicaniſm revolted the
" nation; but when the Houſe of Auſtria thought to aid
" this ſentiment, by throwing out ſome ill-judged

" threats,

" threats, they irritated inſtead of alarming that nation,
" and foreign affairs ſoon became embroiled.—With
" the *public* danger, commenced *your own*. From
" that inſtant, all has been ſuſpicion, ſtruggle and con-
" fuſion: the public without, has been called to take
" part with the popular men within the aſſembly;
" and every ſtep is uſing to prove to the nation the
" neceſſity of a new inſurrection, a new royal family,
" or a new conſtitution, or at leaſt of ſome equivalent
" proviſional meaſures.——This is the *cauſe* of the
" miſchief; What is the *remedy?* It is very brief. A
" Miniſtry repreſents the executive power, (as the
" Aſſembly does the people;) and a Miniſtry muſt be
" choſen, which will be acceptable to the Aſſembly, and
" tolerated by the nation. I know nothing of your
" Miniſters——of thoſe that were, or that are, or that
" are to be; but I conſider your intereſts and thoſe of
" human kind. You will fall unpitied, if you attempt
" any new line of politics; while ill treatment, under
" a conſiſtent conduct, will render you reſpected, what-
" ever be the event: and if a popular Miniſtry for a
" time invade your rights, as the nation is concerned
" in them as well as yourſelf, times of quiet will
" reſtore them either to yourſelf, or to your ſon.——
" The meaſure I ſpeak of is alone *fundamental;* and
" if there are any riſks about it, they are ſuch as muſt be
" encountered. All minor ſacrifices, and every thing
" ſhort of this will be uſeleſs. If deferred, every day
" will accuſtom one ſide to more and greater violences,
" and the other ſide, to a more eſtabliſhed helpleſſneſs
" and deſpair.——But above all things, Sire, beware of
" conſidering the *public* enemy as your *own ally*. You
" alone are made the pretext of their invaſion. Repel
" then the baſe imputations they caſt upon your ſin-
" cerity,

" cerity, and bid them retire in a way in which they " cannot miſunderſtand you.——But be cautious of one " miſtake. The temper of no *nation* in Europe now " inclines to offenſive alliance: theſe are the paſſion " of princes only: your nation, therefore will only " conſent to a *defenſive* alliance with Auſtria; and this " you may conclude to-morrow, with a treaty of " commerce in addition.——If you think that the " Auſtrians and Pruſſians will conquer, becauſe unin- " ſtructed perſons tell you ſo, look back to hiſtory, " and correct their error by your own judgment. In " Greece, Rome, Switzerland, England, Holland, " Corſica, and North-America, *ſovereigns* either native " or foreign, have deſpiſed armies, which were made " up of the people; but by ſuch armies were theſe " ſovereigns finally beaten or diſgraced, their contempt of " them being the ſureſt prelude of their diſappointment. " —To conclude, Sire, you muſt do nothing by halves, " and have no retroſpects; you muſt conſider your " power as derived, not from birth, but from dele- " gation; you muſt tutor your mind to look habitually " and chearfully to the following principle, which " burſt involuntarily from a member of the Britiſh " Senate; namely, *that the People have rights, but that* " *Kings and Princes have none;* (meaning thereby, that " the people derive their rights from *nature*, and Kings " and Princes from *mutable human inſtitutions.*) If you " can do this, you may ſtill be the proudeſt King in " Europe, becauſe your people will aſſociate their am- " bition with your own, to make you ſuch. But if " you cannot do this, you will be worſe than nothing, " for you will be unfortunate.——As this is the lan- " guage of an independent man, without hope, with- " out fear, and who really reſpects you, I truſt

" that

" that it will have its weight, ſhould it fortunately " reach you."

A CALM OBSERVER.

P. S. This letter does not acquit me of my promiſe of giving the late King of Pruſſia's hiſtory of the firſt partition of Poland; which I ſhall ſpeedily fulfil, in a letter which, I truſt, will be my concluding one.

LETTER V.

The Hiſtory of the Firſt Partition of POLAND,

Abridged from the Works of the late King of PRUSSIA;

WITH REMARKS.

Publiſhed Auguſt 13, 1792.

SIR,

I AM now about to give a relation of the firſt partition of Poland, extracted, not from the writings of an envenomed ſufferer, or an uninformed pamphleteer; but from the royal, and, probably, partial hiſtorian, who was himſelf a great and profiting actor in it; and who deliberately addreſſes an account of it to poſterity, in order to increaſe his own glory, as well as their inſtruction.—In this abridgement (in which I muſt obſerve that there are conſiderable tranſpoſitions,) wherever the paſſage is important, I have tranſlated the *original* expreſſions of the author; and therefore, wherever any indignation is rouſed in the reader, he may be aſſured that it is juſtly placed.—Perhaps there never was ſo uſeful a ſpecimen of ſtate-morality exhibited to mankind, in ſo authentic a manner, as in the preſent inſtance; and the young and old politician may equally profit by this faithful exhibition of the wiles of a military Prince who, by being able

to

to add force to his cunning, has fully ſhewn to what extent the ambition of a military potentate can proceed, in ſpite of a literary education, and a civilized age for its ſpectators.——A few obſervations will be ſubjoined, for none are intermixed with the following

Abridged *Account of the Firſt Diviſion of Poland; extracted from the Fifth Volume of the poſthumous Works of* Frederick the Second *of Pruſſia; publiſhed under the Sanction of the preſent King of Pruſſia, by M.* HERTZBERG, *Miniſter to both Sovereigns.*

'The Auſtrians in 1771, having entered the lordſhip 'of Zips, in Poland, upon pretence of ſome money due 'to them by the Republic, the Empreſs of Ruſſia told 'Prince Henry of Pruſſia, that if Auſtria diſmembered Po'land, other neighbours had a right to do the ſame.—The 'hint was ſeaſonable, for it was the only way of content'ing every one, and of avoiding new troubles. But it was 'neceſſary for the King of Pruſſia to know whether 'the Empreſs was ſerious. The King having cauſed the 'Court of Peterſburg to be further ſounded upon this 'ſubject, found that Count Panin had aſſured the Poles, 'that Poland ſhould be kept entire. Nevertheleſs the 'matter was formally debated in the councils of the Em'preſs, and the King was informed that he might reim'burſe himſelf in Poland for the ſubſidies which he had 'lately paid to Ruſſia.—It was inſiſted upon, however, as 'a preliminary, that the King ſhould break the matter to 'the Court of Vienna; which he did, by giving aſſurances 'that Ruſſia felt no umbrage at the Auſtrians having ſta'tioned themſelves on the Poliſh territory; and that he, 'for his part, adviſed poſſeſſion in this quarter to be ex'tended at pleaſure, as the example would be followed 'by other neighbours. Auſtria conceived ſo much jea-

'louſy at this ſuggeſtion, (for reaſons which will ſoon ap-
'pear), that ſhe offered to withdraw her troops from
'Poland. But in a matter of this nature, trifles could
'not diſcourage the King, who knew that Auſtria would
'adopt different ſentiments, if he could only agree with
'Ruſſia, and that Auſtria would be afraid of a war with
'both united. He therefore made no remark on what had
'paſſed, in order to give time to Auſtria for reflection.

'The indolence and ſlowneſs of Ruſſia, however,
'called for ſomething which might excite her; and the
'King informed her of the manner in which Auſtria had
'abuſed her ſituation, as mediatrix between herſelf and
'the Turks with whom ſhe was ſtill at war.—As Ruſſia
'felt that the King was of importance to her, ſhe thought
'it requiſite to procure him ſome advantages; and there-
'fore invited him to ſend her the project of a treaty for
'dividing Poland. The project was ſent, and it gave her
'a carte blanche over Poland.

'Auſtria was averſe to any plan, firſt, leſt her Greek ſub-
'jects in conſequence of their vicinity, ſhould grow too
'fond of Ruſſia; and ſecondly, leſt ſhe ſhould ſuffer by
'having this formidable neighbour introduced (in the place
'of the weaker Turks,) into the Turkiſh provinces.—The
'King, on his part, was no leſs critically ſituated: but
'he was bound to Ruſſia by a treaty, from which he ex-
'pected advantages; and he not only could gain no cre-
'did by neutrality, but it would even be attended with
'*danger;* as the two imperial courts after fighting with
'one another, would have made up their differences at
'his expence.—To ſoften the Auſtrians, therefore, the
'King intimated his hopes of moderating the pretenſions
'of Ruſſia with reſpect to Turkey; but he added, that
'in caſe of extremity, he muſt act as the ally of Ruſſia.
'That he might give weight to this declaration, he in-

'creaſed

'creaſed and remounted his cavalry; a meaſure which 'had the farther effect of occaſioning Ruſſia to reduce 'her pretenſions with reſpect to the Turkiſh poſ-'ſeſſions in the neighbourhood of Auſtria.

'But Ruſſia had ſo formed the project of the treaty re-'ſpecting Poland, that ſhe had placed all the advantage 'on her ſide, and left all the riſk for Pruſſia. The 'King remonſtrated, among other things, that in the 'actual criſis of affairs, it became the dignity of ſo vaſt a 'monarchy as Ruſſia, to pay leſs regard to its own inte-'reſts, than to the *public good*. He alſo deſired on his 'ſide the addition of Dantzic. Theſe repreſentations 'had at firſt the uſual fate, of not being properly attended 'to;—but time led Ruſſia to accommodate herſelf to the 'intereſts of other powers, and ſhe promiſed to give up 'all the Turkiſh conqueſts between the Danube and the 'Dneiſter.—This news being quickly communicated to 'Auſtria, Prince Kaumitz for the firſt time, appeared 'tranquillized; his fears of the great ſucceſſes of Ruſſia 'diſappearing, the moment that it was known that there 'was no danger of her becoming a neighbour. The 'Turks alſo, who were informed of the favourable diſ-'poſition of Ruſſia, and who were ſick of the war, be-'came more tractable on their ſide.—Nevertheleſs Ruſſia 'was ſlow and irreſolute, the principal difficulty ariſing 'from Dantzic, the transfer of which the *Engliſh* excited 'the Ruſſians to oppoſe. In the end, however, the 'King gave up this demand; it being evident, that the 'poſſeſſor of the Viſtula and of the *port* of Dantzic would '*in time*, render the town of Dantzic ſubject to himſelf; 'and that therefore this ceſſion of the town itſelf was in 'fact only *deferred*.—After long delays, Ruſſia ſent her *ulti-'matum* to Pruſſia; and though ſhe ſtipulated for a very 'undue proportion of ſuccours, in caſe of a war with

'Auſtria, yet as Auſtria ſeemed of *late* to have grown 'more pacific, the King reſolved not to put an end to a 'beneficial treaty, for an object which *could never come* 'into *queſtion*.

'A ſecret convention, therefore, between Ruſſia and 'Pruſſia in the firſt inſtance, was ſigned in February 1772; 'and poſſeſſion was agreed to be taken in June; the two 'contracting parties mutually ſtipulating to guarantee 'their acquiſitions in Poland, and to act in concert for 'obtaining the aſſent of the Republic.

'Auſtria, however, was again to be invited to partake 'in this diviſion; but Pruſſia was to join Ruſſia againſt 'her, if ſhe preferred hoſtilities to a ſhare in Poland.— 'It now remained therefore, again to negotiate with 'the Court of Vienna, where parties were divided; for 'while the Emperor deſired to regain certain dominions 'from the Turks, the Empreſs Queen had become de- 'vout and pacific; and Prince Kaunitz heſitated between 'war on one ſide, and the ſpoils of Poland, which might '*hazard* his favourite alliance with the Bourbon family 'on the other.—The King, however, having ſtrongly 'put the neceſſity of chooſing between peace and war, 'Auſtria concluded by reſolving to renounce the alliance 'with the Turks, and all the ſpeculations to be expect- 'ed in that quarter; and to join in the partition of Poland, 'upon terms of a perfect equality, as the only means of 'avoiding war. The event was immediately made 'known to Ruſſia, where it was received with pleaſure: 'and the terms, therefore, previouſly concluded between 'Ruſſia and Pruſſia, on the ſubject of Poland, were now 'communicated to Auſtria.

'In her counter-project, Auſtria took care not to for- 'get herſelf. But, as the King feared the interference of 'other powers, he obtained the aſſent of Ruſſia, after Au-

'ſtria

'ſtria had modified ſome of the conditions of it.—By this 'time Auguſt had arrived, and it was agreed to make a 'concerted declaration to Poland in September; and alſo 'to come into a mutual guarantee of the intended poſ-'ſeſſions.—At the ſame time, Auſtria promiſed to join 'the King, in inducing the Turks to yield to the pro-'poſitions of Ruſſia.

'At an extraordinary Poliſh Diet, which it was agreed 'that the King of Poland ſhould be exhorted to ſummon, 'for the entire pacification of the kingdom, it was deter-'mined that each party ſhould exhibit its *pretenſions* to 'its reſpective ſhare in Poland. The King laid claim to 'one portion, on account of ſome money tranſactions; 'to another portion, as being an ancient family poſſeſſion; 'and to another, as being the equivalent of Dantzic, 'which was ſtated to have been included in the poſſeſſion 'juſt mentioned.—We will not detail here the *rights* of 'the three powers. It was neceſſary that a ſingular con-'juncture ſhould influence all the parties, and produce an '*agreement for a partition*, which alone could prevent a 'general war. In order to indemnify Ruſſia for the '*conqueſts* which the Auſtrians had required ſhould be '*reſtored* to the Porte, there was no method but by 'aſſigning to it poſſeſſions in Poland. Auſtria had ſet 'an example, by occupying Zips with her troops; 'and, to keep up in ſome manner the *balance of power* 'in the North, it was of courſe neceſſary that the King 'ſhould have a ſhare.—This then is the firſt inſtance 'in hiſtory of a diviſion, arranged and terminated '*amicably* between three powers. But without the '*particular poſition of Europe* at the moment, the moſt 'able negotiations would have failed; ſo much do affairs 'depend upon *time and opportunity*.

'As to the Turks, they were not forgotten; and 'Auſtria joined Pruſſia in preſſing for a Congreſs to 'treat of peace with Ruſſia; which accordingly had 'place, and began favourably; but when particulars 'came to be diſcuſſed, the Turks proving ſtubborn, 'the Ruſſian Miniſter, Count Orlow, took them at 'their word and quitted them, as his *perſonal intereſts* 'called him back to Peterſburgh. A ſecond Congreſs at 'Buchareſt did not prove more ſucceſsful; and it was 'not till July 1774, after the Turks had ſuffered much 'from the continuance of the war, that a treaty with 'Ruſſia took effect.

'Several other intervening circumſtances occurred; 'ſuch as the reſiſtance of the Court of *France* to the 'proceedings in Poland, by means of a *Revolution in* 'Sweden; and by her endeavours to form a quadruple 'alliance between herſelf, Great-Britain, Spain, and 'Sardinia, for the ſame object; as well as by her ſug- 'geſting difficulties of a commercial nature reſpecting 'Dantzic, which were adopted by Great-Britain and 'Ruſſia. But as the King treated what reſpected 'Dantzic as an attempt to give law to him in his 'own States, which belonged to him as *fully* as the 'provinces of which the other two powers had taken 'poſſeſſion, he finally perſuaded Ruſſia that every one 'ought to be maſter at *home*.

'But diſcuſſions of a more ſerious nature aroſe.—The 'Ruſſians complained, that Pruſſia and Auſtria had 'exceeded their limits in the diviſion of Poland. The 'King therefore offered to retract on his ſide, if Auſtria 'would do the ſame;—but the Auſtrians, affecting haugh- 'tineſs and a great diſplay of dignity, peremptorily re- 'fuſed to *yield an inch*, and every thing was ſuffered to 'remain.

'The

'The diet now aſſembling in Poland, in July 1773, 'the three Courts publiſhed their manifeſto, with a 'deduction of their claims; which they ſupported by 'the march of troops, who were ordered to act in con- 'cert againſt ſuch nobles, as caballed or oppoſed the '*novelties* introducing into their country; and the King 'and Republic were required to ſign.—The Poles made 'delays and difficulties; but the Court of Vienna pro- 'poſed to fix a day, which, if not attended to, the 'three Courts would immediately divide the *whole* 'kingdom between them; but it was added, that out 'of *regard*, and if they gave marks of docility, the 'troops ſhould be withdrawn, after the act of ceſſion 'was ſigned.—No ſooner was this declaration publiſhed, 'than every thing arranged itſelf; the whole was ſigned 'before September; and Poland had her *remaining* 'provinces *guaranteed* to her.

'The Poles at firſt were ſoured, and hoped that Ruſſia 'would ſtill meet with difficulties from the Turks;—but 'inſtead of ſeeing their expectation fulfilled, they had '*new* complaints to make of the encroachments of 'Auſtria and Pruſſia, which were not altogether with- 'out foundation; for the Auſtrians, uſing a defective 'map of Poland, had confounded the names of two 'rivers; and the King thought it neceſſary, upon the 'agreed principle of an *equality in the partition*, to '*extend* his *own* boundaries after their example.—Here 'again Ruſſia interfered, and again the King offered 'to be ruled by the proceedings of Auſtria;—but Auſtria, 'dry and haughty, again announced her firm reſolution '*not to quit poſſeſſion*.

'Dantzic and the Auſtrian encroachments were ſtill, 'however, the ſubject of negotiation or difficulty, when 'Ruſſia received the copy of the Treaty between Vienna

'and the Porte, *ſigned in* 1771;—by which Auſtria had 'engaged to oblige Ruſſia to reſtore her conqueſts over 'Turkey, upon *condition* that Turkey ſhould pay her a 'ſubſidy, and make certain ceſſions, (which would 'render Auſtria an umpire between theſe two powers 'in any ſucceeding war.) But though the treaty was 'never ratified, Auſtria had *received ſome of the money*; 'and after ſigning the treaty reſpecting Poland, ſhe had 'thrown obſtacles in the way of Ruſſia, with regard to 'the Turks.——The King had reaſon to complain, 'as well as Ruſſia; becauſe he had been led to engage 'the Ruſſians to deſiſt from their conqueſts.—Theſe 'intrigues diſcovered the unmeaſured ambition and 'deſire of aggrandizement in Auſtria; and ought to 'make other powers upon their guard, as to what *ſhe* 'may undertake in future.—The Ruſſians, however, 'deſired to transfer the whole quarrel to Pruſſia, 'and to engage the King as a bold champion, to pro-'voke Auſtria to combat; but the Turks being ſilent, 'and the circumſtances of Europe being alſo unpro-'miſing, the King wrote to Peterſburgh, that he did 'not chooſe to make himſelf the *Don Quixotte of the* 'Turks.

'The Poles did not readily accede to the *extenſion* of 'the Auſtrian and Pruſſian boundaries; and the dele-'gation of the diet, employed itſelf upon what was 'called a *Reform of Government:* nevertheleſs, Auſtria 'and Pruſſia continued to retain poſſeſſion.—Ruſſia 'was impreſſed with the complaints of the Poles, at 'what they termed the deſpotiſm of theſe powers; 'for, having *given* Provinces to great Sovereigns, ſhe 'was ſtill more flattered to be able to *limit* their boun-'daries.—The King, however, had concerted it with 'Auſtria, that both parties ſhould *perſiſt*, and ſuffer

'the

'the Poles to clamour, but at the ſame time endeavour
'to pacify Ruſſia; and it was for this purpoſe, that
'Prince Henry again went to Ruſſia.——Nevertheleſs
'Auſtria, to embroil the two Courts, offered upon this
'occaſion to make ſome *little conceſſion*, which Pruſſia
'was *obliged to follow*; and it was not till 1777, that
'all the affairs of Poland were completely terminated.

'In the interim, *Auſtria*, under pretence of fixing
'boundaries, had forced the Turks to ſurrender to her a
'part of Buckowina; and jointly with *France*, ſhe had
'excited againſt Ruſſia a ſort of hoſtilities in the Crimea,
'which, however, were ſoon appeaſed;—while, on the
'other hand, the Ruſſian Miniſter governed the *re-*
'*mainder of Poland* in the name of the Empreſs, nearly
'in the ſame manner that a Roman proconſul uſed to
'govern a province of the Roman Empire; and on
'*every* ſide, the *tranquillity of Europe* appeared upon
'the point of being diſturbed.—This was ſtill more
'true in 1775. Every where the fire lurked under
'its own aſhes.——Conſiderations of this ſort, oblige
'prudent Sovereigns to remain upon their guard, and
'not to withdraw their attention from affairs which
'may embroil themſelves, when *leaſt* looked for.—It
'ſeems, upon caſting an eye over hiſtory, that viciſ-
'ſitudes and revolutions are one of the permanent
'laws of nature, and that all in this world is ſub-
'ject to change; and yet, madmen are attached to
'and idolize the objects of their ambition, without
'being undeceived by the illuſions of this magic lan-
'tern, which, in their eyes, are always perfectly new.
'But there are toys for every age: love for the adult,
'ambition for riper years, and political calculations for
'old men.'

Such

Such is the royal relation of the memorable partition of Poland, now perhaps deſigned to be repeated by nearly the ſame actors; and ſuch are the ſort of perſonages to whoſe juſtice and benevolence the Duke of Brunſwick thinks, that twenty-ſix millions of ſouls in France are to be conſigned in fee ſimple, as ſlaves, without one check but the Monarch's gracious pleaſure and promiſe. The good eaſy man in private life, who ſees municipal laws and tribunals dictating juſtice to ſubjects, and who endeavours to render it in his own perſon to his neighbours, and even many of thoſe who haunt the anti-chambers of the great, duped either by their own feelings or their ignorance; have looked hitherto, perhaps, with complacency, or at leaſt with patience, on the proceedings of *military* Princes: but they are now let at once into their cabinets; they tread their holy of holies, and view the book of their covenant; and ſee in it their ſelfiſhneſs, their injuſtice, and their falſehood, written deeply and immutably in large characters of blood.—The diſplay of theſe horrors is too luminous to fail of *conviction* with any; but it is neceſſary that the impreſſion ſhould be forcible enough to lead to immediate *action*; and for this purpoſe I beg to introduce my promiſed

REMARKS.

1. It is prettily ſaid by ſome one, that when a lamb is once devoted, any thicket into which it happens to ſtray, will furniſh the fuel neceſſary for its ſacrifice. But here Poland had not ſtrayed; and the only thing to impute to it was, that itſelf was weak, and that its ſacrificers were ſtrong.—They looked out for pretexts, therefore, againſt this lamb, juſt as the wolf did in the fable;

fable; for it was not the pretext for the ſlaughter which offered itſelf firſt to their minds, but the reſolution to devour; and the pretext was only produced, becauſe the affairs of Princes ſeemed to require certain ceremonials.—But if kingdoms are allowed to be merely private properties, it would follow (as the King ſaid regarding the Dantzickers) that at leaſt, *chacun eſt maitre chez ſoi*, every one is uncontrolled at home: But this principle, which was deſigned to hold good againſt Dantzic, whenever raviſhed *from* Poland, was not allowed to operate in preſerving its connexion with Poland; it being the rule of military Princes that *might makes right*.——To have a clearer idea of the caſe before us, let it be ſuppoſed, that to two litigants, who were haraſſed with an expenſive and dubious civil ſuit, a third party ſhould ſuggeſt as follows: 'An eaſy 'prize, more valuable than that for which you ſtruggle, 'offers: it belongs indeed to another, but if you find 'reſiſtance, it will be a reaſon to ſtrip the party of his 'whole poſſeſſions: but, in the mean time, though I 'aſſume the guiſe of a mediator between you, I claim 'a third of the ſpoil, to enable me to meet you on 'proportional terms, ſhould I have future diſputes with 'either of *yourſelves*.'——A ſecond partition of Poland, however, at this inſtant, would be ſtill more flagrant than the firſt; becauſe the triumvirs having no contentious ſuit at iſſue, and Poland having lately aſſumed a reſpectable face in her internal government, the partition could only ſtand upon the principle which juſtifies any three men in private life in robbing a weaker fourth.

2. The relation I have given above, exhibits the little truſt in politics to be repoſed in promiſes, in flattering proſpects, or in ſhort, in any thing but in caution and invulnerability.

invulnerability.——In the brief negotiation before us, we have ſeen Pruſſia, firſt in an underſtanding with both of its rivals, and then thwarted by both of them; next, we have obſerved that Poland, which ſprang like the ram from the buſh to become an offering for another, and which was to prove an univerſal panacea, failed after all in procuring an immediate peace for Turkey, and did not prevent the war in 1778, about Bavaria; and when the peace was made for Turkey, Turkey was only found to be ſaved from Ruſſia, to be pillaged by Auſtria. Since the year 1777, Auſtria has been repeatedly embroiled with Pruſſia, and Pruſſia with Ruſſia. Lately, indeed, there have followed ſcenes of amity; for firſt, Ruſſia and Auſtria have come into league; next Pruſſia has aſſociated with Turkey and Poland; and then, after abandoning both of theſe powers, Pruſſia has joined itſelf to Ruſſia and Auſtria, in order to eſtabliſh a more powerful triumvirate. But whether it was an alliance made, or an alliance broken, the reaſon was the ſame; each party acted for his intereſt at the moment; and, therefore, as no bonds could be a ſecurity againſt tergiverſation, ſo no enmity ever rendered a reconciliation hopeleſs.—The ſame for guarantees. The triumvirate guaranteed the fragment of Poland, and yet Ruſſia immediately governed it as a Roman province; and its independence is again attacked by Ruſſia and the other triumvirs at the preſent moment. The Poliſh diſſidents, againſt whom Pruſſia fought previous to the firſt partition, are the very ſame perſons whom Ruſſia is now ſupporting; and *vice verſa* as to their opponents. The old form of Government in Sweden alſo was long under the guarantee of Ruſſia; yet Ruſſia afterwards confirmed the ſcandalous change made in it by its deceaſed Monarch, becauſe it ſuited her politics. I ſhall only

only allude to, but not enlarge upon, various other events in the Low Countries, and other parts of the Auſtrian dominions, as well as in Liege, Holland, Turkey, and Sweden, all of which ſhew, that amidſt outward civilities there may be ſecret intrigues; and that when the turn is ſerved, *ſauve qui peut*, no matter for the hindmoſt.—Two ſmaller traits in the hiſtory of the above negotiation, indicate the King of Pruſſia's want of fidelity, not under the preſſure of ſubſequent circumſtances, but even at the moment of framing his engagments; I mean where he deſiſts from his demand of the *town* of Dantzic, becauſe he could afterwards make himſelf maſter of it; and where he ſigned an article for furniſhing ſuccours to Ruſſia againſt Auſtria, with which it is clear he never deſigned to comply, though he ſtates it as his mental pretext, that they never could be called for.—But the King of Pruſſia's adjuſtment of the difficulty about the *extra* encroachments of Auſtria, beyond the original compact, by making *equivalent* encroachments on his ſide, is not leſs in point than the reſt. One would think that this ſagacious politician had taken his hint (for wiſe men turn ſmall hints to great account) from the monkey in the fable, who had to divide a ſtolen cheeſe between two cats; and that, like the monkey, in balancing the more and the leſs, he would have approved of a ſwallow of the whole of Poland, had he not been afraid of the reſt of Europe diſturbing the repaſt.—I ſhall add another circumſtance under this head, which is, that the ſilence of princes, and their petty bickerings, form as little ſafeguard as their promiſes; for the treaty for the partition of Poland, after being firſt made between double, and then between triple parties, and meeting many delays and fluctuations; burſt forth upon the Poles at the end of

ſecret

ſecret conferences between the triumvirs, which had laſted during *a year and an half*; and the late movements of M. Biſhopsfwoerder prove, that the preſent plans of the triumvirate have alſo been concerted and waiting for the ſeaſon of their execution for a number of months.—And can any nation then, and eſpecially a free nation, where powerful military princes are concerned, count itſelf ſafe upon any other principle, than its own vigilance, and its exciting that of other powers?—I do not however accuſe the late King of Pruſſia of duplicity in the pacific and even paternal language which he held at the cloſe of his life, which every prince ought deeply to ſtudy; nor do I ſuppoſe that this change was altogether like that of certain females whoſe morals improve with age, owing to extinguiſhed paſſions, and the offenſive progreſs of younger candidates for admiration. On the contrary, his philoſophic purſuits and his improvement of his dominions, (where he verified his ſimile, that "princes ought to be like the "ſpear of Achilles, which inflicts wounds and cures "them; which cauſes miſchiefs to nations, and ſhould "repair them;") I ſay his conduct in theſe regards ſhewed that he was worthy of much eſteem. In like manner the Empreſs of Ruſſia in many particulars, commands the reſpect of Europe; and the late Emperor Joſeph merited far more applauſe than he has received.—But unfortunately, they were *military potentates*; and ſtill more to infatuate them, they were *triumvirs*; and the faſcinations of uncontrolled power are too much for human virtue and human intellect long to withſtand.

3. The diſtruſt which theſe great powers manifeſted for one another is very inſtructive to the reſt of Europe. They certainly acted wiſely, for they knew their own characters.—But is it not wonderful that Great-Britain ſhould omit to copy the diffidence exhibited by ſuch good

good judges, founded on their reſpective ſelf-knowledge, and confirmed by public and private incidents regarding each other? Indeed thoſe, who are read in diplomatic memoirs, are ſenſible, that the above negotiation is but a ſample for all the reſt.——When royal perſonages therefore call each other brothers, couſins, and friends, they only deſign to ſignify that they are of a different race from their ſubjects; and that, in ſpite of all their double dealings, they are connected excluſively with *one another* as *princes*.

4. After the great planets of our ſublunary world have for ages exerted their ſkill in oppoſitions, they are now at laſt trying the effect of conjunctions; and inſtead of waſting their ſtrength upon each other in hard blows with little profit and perpetual reſentment, they think it better for thoſe who are ſtrong to aſſociate with one another, againſt thoſe who are feeble.—I am afraid that their ſecret is too well founded upon the ſtate of human affairs; as the triumvirs are placed in parts of the world, which are diſunited, weak, or rich; and are able to make the ſame individuals who fight unſucceſsfully in the hands of their enemies, become valuable recruits, to augment their own forces. And be it remembered, that for many years, the triumvirs, ſeparately or jointly, have always been engaged in attempts at plunder; and that whatever plunder they have obtained by any peace or in any convention, they have *permanently retained*, whether won from Poland, Turkey, Sweden, or in part even from Bavaria.—— Suppoſe the remnant of Poland then and the French nation, to be next reduced; and ſuppoſe, that without either of theſe countries being farther diſſevered as to their territory, yet that both ſhould only be taken out of the balance of Europe by internal circumſtances or foreign

foreign influence; what is to become of Great-Britain, after thirty-five millions of people are thus, as it were annulled in Poland and France, (if not oppoſed to her) when the triumvirate is at the head of near ſixty other millions of people of their own? Has ſhe allies in Europe, or out of Europe, or allies upon another globe, ready to take her part in ſuch a criſis? Will ſhe who uſed to protect others, herſelf find any protectors? Will ſhe hang her fate upon the ſingle thread of a ſtate marriage, of which the death of *either* of the contracted parties, or the want of iſſue, or a counter-ſtate marriage, or various other incidents, may defeat the effect; and when the ally alſo, to whom it ſeems to connect us, may have fallen a prey to falſe friendſhips, or have overſtrained himſelf by unweildy enterprizes, or may prefer a ſullen or politic neutrality to action in our favour; and when that alliance may be perverted to dangerous internal purpoſes? —But the caſe is ſtrong enough on the footing of *foreign* politics, without alluding to the *conſtitutional* difficulties capable of ariſing out of it:—I ſhall therefore conclude this head by obſerving, that as the nature of the Britiſh Government recoils from a ſettled ſyſtem of conqueſt; and as we are ſtrong enough to excite jealouſy in conquerors, and rich enough to pay the expences of our own ſubduing; we are likely to become the objects of direct attack, to thoſe whoſe plans we ſhall not aid, and which we may therefore endanger, unleſs we ourſelves are firſt diſabled; till by degrees we may at laſt arrive to the dignity of becoming a ſcape-goat or make-weight, like Poland or Holland, in ſome of the quarrels or ſome of the projects of the potentates of a higher order. Whether this is to happen now, or a little time hence, is not a point upon

upon which we are permitted to calculate; ſince none at any period, muſt have the power either directly to ruin us, or to alarm and enfeeble us by the neceſſity of large defenſive armaments.

5. If it be ſaid, that the triumvirs may ſoon quarrel, I allow it; but not before they may have done fatal miſchief during the time of their having remained agreed. If like the chiefs of the foreſt, they congregate to ſeize their prey, and then fight about the diviſion, what conſolation is this to the fallen victim?—But I have already ſhewn the diſtinction between treaties which are *proſpective* only in their action, and thoſe which are *immediate*; between treaties which often operate as a burthen on *one* ſide, and thoſe which preſent temptations to *both* ſides; between treaties where *diſparity of force* both ſuperſedes the need of war and enſures the booty, and thoſe where nothing is certain but the conflict.—As the treaty of the triumvirs is of the more dangerous of theſe two ſpecies, let us not lay the flattering unction to our ſouls, that diſcord is to defeat their efforts. The triumvirs aſſembled in 1772, ruined Poland, ſerved themſelves, and then quarrelled at their leiſure. They have aſſembled again in 1792. Poland is again their ſpoil, and they menace France in addition; and after again doing miſchief, which may or may not ſerve themſelves, what is it to us, if they again quarrel, again to agree, in order to accompliſh farther evil?—They move like a maſs of mountain ſnow, formed in cold and lofty regions, which progreſſively augmenting itſelf in proportion to its ſize and weight, may perhaps ſplit itſelf into fragments againſt ſome vaſt obſtacle interpoſed by nature, or lie to be diſſolved in the ſunſhine of a luxurious proſperity; but not before it has marked its rapid paſſage by an univerſal ruin of the works of man.—Whether they actually conquer

 therefore,

therefore, or whether they only actively or paſſively *threaten* conqueſt, they will in each way do us harm.—Let us then check the beginning of the evil, which alone is in our power, without waiting for the end of it, which is not only beyond remedy, but even beyond mitigation.—There appear no limits to the *ſtrength* of the triumvirs, and we are certain that there are none to their *ambition*, of which the vaſt capacious maw, inſtead of being ſatisfied by having devoured kingdoms, only acquires thence new inclination and new force to gorge in farther havoc.

6. I have ſaid nothing of commerce, becauſe I think it is a minor and dependent conſideration. But how can commerce, which is a much leſs hardy plant than agriculture, flouriſh in the climate of deſpotiſm, amidſt fickle blaſts and eternal ſnows, where the ſun only now and then as an act of chance, plays upon the ſurface? Beſides, commercial connexions are ſlow of growth, and eaſily injured or deſtroyed.—I have not had it at heart, therefore, to ſay any thing reſpecting *particular* modes in which the proceedings of the triumvirate may affect our commerce, as it appeared to me that deſpotiſm is an evil ſo extenſive, as to ſtrike at *all* our trade.—But a few words will ſhew that I did not ſhun the more limited inquiry, as turning to my diſadvantage; for firſt, (with reſpect to the Ruſſian trade,) we depend leſs than has been apprehended, upon foreign commerce, which only reſpects *partial* tranſactions with foreign nations; whereas our internal commerce reſpects the total interchange between ſubject and ſubject, taking it in a retail ſenſe, and in moſt inſtances even in a wholeſale one, and likewiſe as including both conſumption or ſupply; all which, the ſeparation of America, and various wars, and various incidents under commercial treaties, have fully proved.—In the next place, a circuitous

commerce

commerce is often to be ſubſtituted for a direct one, where a direct one is interrupted; and where a ſtate is flouriſhing, the hands and the capital thrown out of one employment commonly fall into another.—Beſides, ſhould Ruſſia interdict our commerce, ſhe can only wound us by a blow which muſt firſt pierce through herſelf; and the experiment might be attended with more than a temporary inconvenience to her, conſidering the ſimilar ſources of ſupply offering in the old and recent ſettlements of North America, as well as in other countries.—I ſhall not dwell upon the trite, but true arguments, that general civilization and increaſe of population extend markets; that general wealth renders them more and more profitable; and that there is a peculiar advantage in a perfected country like England, trading with a rude country like Poland. I ſhall rather conclude by obſerving, that it is a ſerious difficulty to a trading nation whenever any of its cuſtomers are deprived of a direct acceſs to the ſea, and that this may ſoon become the caſe with the Poliſh territories, if not attended to. The difficulties impoſed upon the *tranſit* of commodities are found capable in various countries, though under the *ſame* dominion, of operating to extinguiſh trade; and this will be ſtill more true in the caſe of a difference of *ſovereignty*, and eſpecially between powers unequal in their ſtrength or means of retaliation.—I ſhall now conclude with a few words reſpecting Pruſſia and France.

Pruſſia is a power, of which I have ventured to ſpeak with the more freedom, on account of the intereſt which every loyal Britiſh ſubject muſt feel in it. The former ſucceſſes of Pruſſia, however, I would obſerve, have been chiefly owing to her always fighting at home,

with choſen troops, under a monarch who, as ſuch, inſpired them with peculiar energy; and who always carrying in himſelf his whole cabinet, and always making his military and civil concerns in turn yield to each other; and being able alſo as ſovereign, to ſtifle jealouſies between his commanders, and from his central poſt to lend or borrow troops throughout his different armies and garriſons, in order to face his ſurrounding enemies both in winter and ſummer, as his central knowledge ſhewed to be neceſſary, had peculiar advantages; eſpecially as being beſides, a ſovereign of rigid œconomy, and having a barren frontier to oppoſe to Ruſſia and to Sweden.—But the face of things is greatly changed, when a more expenſive court occurs; and when for a home, there is a diſtant war preſented, in which the Pruſſian ſoldiers are to be ſeparated from their families; the domeſtic magazines are to be put out of the queſtion, and forage and army rations are either to be bought with money in an exhauſted country, or with blood in a hoſtile one; and when the ſole active force of the aſſailants has to overcome both the active and local forces, the fortreſſes, and the other reſources of the defenders of a proud, populous, and military country, which ſpends all its money at home, and which, if it weathers the firſt burſt of the ſtorm, will probably ſoon poſſeſs more union than can ever belong to jealous allies.—Beſides, if the Pruſſian army meets with accidents, whether from war or deſertion, the King of Pruſſia will be like a trader loſing the *chief of his ſtock in trade*, as it cannot be eaſy to him ſoon to replace it with another equally good, or equally numerous; and when a power, naturally of the ſecond order, once falls into a ſtate of weakneſs, it becomes another word for a ſtate of inſult; and its ſmalleſt lapſe

below

below its artificial level, may prevent its being ever again able to regain it, at leaſt without expenſive and bloody efforts.—I ſhall not here diſcuſs the queſtion concerning the *new allies* of Pruſſia, for ſhe is now the ally not only of Auſtria, but of Ruſſia, I ſhall only obſerve, that as no man can ſerve two maſters, ſo no man can be the ſupporter of contending intereſts. *Idem velle, idem nolle; ea demum amicitia.*

France is become a very peculiar country, full of contradictions, and ever making progreſs in the moſt important and unexpected changes. But whatever it may do to itſelf, it becomes not *us* to cauſe its ruin.—Every ſtruggle upon earth, in my opinion, ought to be uſed to keep the French together, to prevent its being neceſſary for us ſingly to play the part of *knight errants*, in defence of the diſtreſſed powers of Europe. The taſk is neceſſary as long as triumvirs exiſt; but it ſhould not fall upon us to hold the heavy ſcales of Europe, and the other quarters of the world *alone*.—From the pace at which things are moving on in France, it is hard to ſay, whether France would be completely ſatisfied, *even upon the ratification of the preſent French Conſtitution by the triumvirs*, with the *preſent King* as its chief. Certain it is, however, that we ought to endeavour to procure this preciſe termination to the buſineſs; both in order to withdraw Pruſſia from a ſcene of difficulty, and even to facilitate the retreat of Auſtria; as well as to reſtore to Europe the proper number and weight of its poiſes; and there is nothing yet appearing on the part of the allies, which does not *conſiſtently admit of* this meaſure. In addition to this, we ought as much as poſſible, to join the French in propagating *pacific principles*, both by reaſon and by force, if neceſſary; and to make every power ſit down

content with the *uti poſſidetis*, which is ſurely enough to ſatisfy both the happineſs and the honourable pride of them all, and is a meaſure greatly in favour of ourſelves. If the Legiſlative Body in France *exceeds* its duty, there is no candid man but muſt allow, that the Executive has hitherto *fallen ſhort* of it; and yet the good of the country requires, while their form of conſtitution laſts, that each party ſhould be held in its place. Were I the King (if he be yet a King*,) I would deſire the *Aſſembly* to name me a miniſtry, and embrace it as my ſaviour; for when the hill will not go to Mahommed, Mahommed muſt go to the hill. The ſacrifice is rendered bitter by nothing but pride; but an univerſal concert within and without France, would ſoon pacify pride.—And as to the counter-ſtroke which ſuch an event would have upon our own domeſtic ſituation, it is ridiculous in the preſent moment to think of it; and yet none are more oppoſed than myſelf to great and violent changes at home; as I deſire not in my time to ſee any thing beyond our preſent conſtitution of King, Lords, and Commons, with a few well known and prudent reforms, in which all lovers of quiet, high or low, ſeem to me alike intereſted.

My time is more exhauſted than my ſubject; but let me be allowed to heave, as I hope, only a paſſing ſigh in favour of *Poland*. Its amiable king, who certainly loves his people, for he loves human kind; who is brave, as well as patient; and who has ſhewn ſufficient diſintereſtedneſs, by riſking at a late period of life, without having any lineal ſucceſſor, both his quiet and his throne, by originally introducing the new conſtitution; ſuch a king, I ſay, can only have yielded to a ſad neceſſity in ſubmitting to receive law from

* The 10th of Auguſt proved this to be a prophetic doubt.

Ruſſia

Ruſſia and Pruſſia.—I do not, however, by any means think the fate of things in Poland finally decided on the ſide of misfortune. The good ſenſe of Ruſſia leaves much open to reflection and mediation; but if Ruſſia proves, as I cannot believe, obdurate, it will then be for Europe to conſider, how far a power ſituated in one corner of it, is to give law to its other kingdoms; and as many years ago Ruſſia was able to march 10,000 men to the banks of the Rhine, it becomes Great-Britain alſo to contemplate what is to happen, ſhould ſhe proceed by internal routes to India, or lead a hundred thouſand men oppoſite to the Britiſh coaſt, or againſt any of our allies. In any event, whatever be the perſecution of Ruſſia, or the deſertion of Europe, the King of Poland and the Poles have this to conſole them—that nothing can be done to them which will not place them higher in the opinion of *all* mankind, preſent and future, than their tyrants and betrayers, if by ſuch they are to ſuffer.

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTER VII*.

Publiſhed March 25 and 29, 1793.

SIR,

THE event of our war with France muſt be one of the three following deſcriptions: ſucceſsful, diſaſtrous, or mixed. If it is to be diſaſtrous or mixed, *none* will deny the eligibility of an inſtant peace.—But what will be ſaid when it is affirmed, that a war of *ſucceſs* is that, which is to be deprecated by us beyond every

* Several letters are here omitted, as irrelative to the general ſubject.

other? This ſeeming paradox, however, will ſpeedily vaniſh.

It is not we ourſelves, but continental powers (acknowledged in the caſes of Ockzakow and Poland, *not* to be ſubject to our influence) who take the lead in the preſent war; and the war is by them directed, not againſt the detachment and puny *foreign* poſſeſſions of France, but againſt her very *vitals and exiſtence*; and ſince the chief of theſe powers have combined upon plans of aggrandizement, to which France has hitherto proved the natural and ſucceſsful barrier, whatever portion of France ſhall be ſeized by either of them, will have the double effect, of diminiſhing the obſtacles, and of adding to the ſtrength of a confederacy, whoſe objects are terrible for Europe, and for mankind.—Having ſaid thus much to appeaſe ſurpriſe, I ſhall now proceed to obtain conviction.

It is pretended, that one object of the preſent war is to regulate the *balance of power* (after the example of our forefathers.)—Without at preſent diſcuſſing the merit of the *ſyſtem itſelf* in queſtion, I contend, that we are at leaſt violating the principle of it, by a conduct which, *upon the ſuppoſition of ſucceſs*, muſt deſtroy, inſtead of preſerving that balance; for, notwithſtanding during the laſt century, the powers of Europe have changed both their mutual proportions and their relations to one another, yet we think to continue that balance, by conſtantly retaining our *old poſition*.—France of late, it is to be obſerved had Spain at all times, and Auſtria or Pruſſia alternatively, as her certain allies; but at preſent, when *every* power whatever is alienated from France, we think that we have nothing to do, as good poſture-maſters, but to perſiſt in adding our own weight againſt that of France. *Idem manebat, neque idem decebat*: we keep to old practice under

under a rule, of which the very eſſence implies, a *variation according to circumſtances*.

This is the more extraordinary, as the following important novelties have occurred in modern Europe.—Firſt, *Ruſſia*, inſtead of remaining chained to her woods, and being as barbarous as the beaſts that inhabit them, has lately ſpread herſelf widely into the politics, as well of Europe, as of Aſia; having civilized (if I may uſe the phraſe) her military eſtabliſhments and created a navy, having aſtoniſhingly augmented her revenue, her territory, and her population, and having exhibited the only marks of reach in political intrigue ſeen in *any* of the preſent continental cabinets.——In the next place, *Auſtria*, which is at laſt become the Pruſſia of Europe, as to military diſcipline, has abandoned all her old jealouſies of the neighbourhood of *Ruſſia*, and is demonſtrably leagued with her *upon a ſyſtem of aggrandizement*. At the ſame time, *Turkey*, which is daily decaying in power; *Poland*, which is already partly diſmembered, and which now lies bound under the knife of its butchers, ready to be finally diſſevered; together with the independent States of Germany, which having loſt their two late protectors in France and Pruſſia, are independent only in name; I ſay theſe ſeveral countries reſpectively offer a general magazine of plunder to theſe over-weening potentates. Pruſſia, the *would-be* ſharer in the golden fleece, will probably entangle her talons in the burthen; and while, as uſual, ſhe thinks that ſhe is deceiving others, will be betrayed herſelf; for her army, faſt diſſolving itſelf, her military diſcipline viſibly declining, and her population being but as *one to eight*, compared to the united numbers of the preceding powers; ſhe may at once be caught, along with her plunder, and converted into a common prey.—For the moment, however, theſe three powers

appear

appear at leaſt to be ſo far in an underſtanding with one another, as not openly to obſtruct their mutual projects; and when their population is joined to that of Poland and Sardinia, they form a maſs of near ſeventy millions of people for effecting their purpoſes.—The whole of this dangerous compound does not indeed immediately act againſt France; becauſe Ruſſia has cunningly engaged the reſt of them to plunge into troubled waters, while ſhe herſelf (according to the proverb) takes the ſure part of holding the clothes of the ſwimmers; but, ſince ſhe is agreed upon a SYSTEM *of partition*, which comprehends the *French territory*, ſhe co-operates in the fundamental deſtruction of the *balance of Europe*.

Not content, however, with calmly witneſſing this formidable combination, we ourſelves add freſh aſſociates to it, in the perſons of Great-Britain, Holland, Spain, and (according to Mr. Dundas) of "every other power "of Europe that we can bring down;" pretending among other ſagacious objects, that we are to depreſs France, in order *to preſerve the balance of power*.—After France, under Louis XIV. had obtained full demonſtration of the impoſſibility of *ruling* Europe, ſhe has ever ſince reſted content with being its *ſcale-holder*; conſtantly (as I have formerly proved,) oppoſing the ſtrong, and aiding the weak, in order to dreſs the ſcales, and preſerve the balance.—Yet her countenance in this uſeful, but expenſive and haraſſing office, is that for which we are endeavouring to incapacitate her; though we know of *none to replace her in it*; but on the contrary, ſee that the already preponderating ſcales of the confederacy are ſo peculiarly placed, as to be the receptacle of all the fragments of dominion to be gathered up from the eaſt and centre of Europe, as well as from part of the North and of the South.

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The imprudence of our conduct will eaſily be felt from an example.—In the primary diſmemberment of Poland, France (according to the deciſive teſtimony of the late King of Pruſſia) was the *only* active opponent of the meaſure; for abandoning all predilections for her ally, the Houſe of Auſtria, ſhe ſought to form a league in the *weſt* of Europe (which ſhould include England,) againſt this encroachment meditated in the *eaſt* of it; and though ſhe failed upon a large plan, yet by her active ſuggeſtions ſhe at leaſt helped to reſcue Dantzic from its devourers.—In the preſent attack upon Poland, no fair man can contend that France would not have combined even *enthuſiaſtically* with England, Holland, Spain, and other powers, to have prevented a crime, rendered ſtill more enormous in itſelf, and more dangerous to all, by its repetition.—Thus, to France, had ſhe been countenanced, would have been twice owing the very important preſervation of an European power; for it needs little to demonſtrate, that the more *numerous* are the powers of Europe, the leſs probability is there of their general *combination*; by which *alone* the balance, and conſequently the independence of Europe, is at all to be endangered.

Nothing can be more idle, than for a great and inſular power, like England, to be meddling in continental quarrels, when they are to end only in *trifling changes*; becauſe the remnant of Europe, would always be ſtrong enough to rally againſt the ambition of powers aiming at *univerſal* rule, and England would always be in time to interpoſe in their favour.—But when the changes in Europe are *immenſe*; when the ſuperior powers in it forget their jealouſies, and league with one another againſt the inferior; and when their greateſt opponent is fallen into a ſtate of diſtraction, (the opportunity offered by which they inſtantly

inſtantly ſeize for plunder;) the moſt puerile politician, who condeſcends to refer to his acknowledged *firſt principles*, muſt ſee, that the only antagoniſt power which is left, ought not to be debilitated, and ſtill leſs to be extinguiſhed; and that if poſitive aid and friendly counſels are refuſed to it, yet at leaſt neutrality towards it in others, is imperiouſly commanded by the moſt weighty of all political conſiderations.—Miniſtry have allowed that the difficulty lately occurring in ſaving Poland, lay in the want of a co-operating *territorial* power; and they allow alſo that the difficulty at preſent of aſſiſting Holland, notwithſtanding its vicinity, is owing to the ſame cauſe, namely, our want of troops, though Holland is interſected with waters, where our navy can be uſeful. What then muſt be the difficulty of defending European and Aſiatic Turkey, as alſo Bavaria, Saxony, and all the ſmaller ſpots of European territory; which like floating ice-iſlands that lie forlorn in the ocean, will gradually melt into and augment the body that ſurrounds them?—And is even *Pruſſia* to be deemed ſecure, when, deſpiſed for her weakneſs, and ſtill more for her verſatility, her only remaining ſafeguard is to reſt in the *moderation* of the ambitious? When ſhe ſhall become a lonely inhabitant in that wilderneſs in Europe, which her own folly will have created, will not her profligate accomplices turn back upon her, to make her renounce her prey, and force her to paſs into the throng of the vanquiſhed?—Can Holland be preſerved any more than Pruſſia?—Is *Hanover*, which is always ſo difficult to be protected, to find any greater ſecurity, when ſhe has loſt the benefit of the protecting ſyſtem of Europe? Is Great-Britain to waſte herſelf in the vain enterpriſe, of covering a diſtant petty territory, againſt the attacks of immenſe contiguous continental powers? Is the reſource of the royal proprietors of Hano-

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ver to reſt in a criminal colluſion with the coalition of deſpots, which muſt in itſelf be ſo dangerous to England?—No; the ancient jealouſy of France to England will paſs into the boſoms of thoſe, who in caſe of ſucceſs, will be the *new* maſters of France; and who will conſequently be the derivative claimants of her *maritime* poſſeſſions; and as the navy of England, (their only check,) will affront their pride and oppoſe their intereſts, *Delenda eſt Carthago* will become their conſtant policy towards England: beſides, that in that awful ſeaſon, when the danger of the confederacy ſhall be diſplayed in its real extent, the Engliſh nation will probably be too much agitated, to permit any connection ſo contaminating and ſo fatal, as that with a *band of robbers*. Conſequently Hanover can no more promiſe to itſelf ſafety than the reſt.

The phraſe employed by our anceſtors upon this ſubject, is of a nature to teach us wiſdom; for they inſiſted, not upon the balance of *alliances*, but upon "the balance "of *power*." They looked with no confidence at what princes might *promiſe* to do, but with terror only at what they were *able* to do; and whenever theſe princes had power to do wrong, they thought they would have inclination to do it. In *this* ſenſe then, they acted reſpecting the balance of power.—In the ſame manner, the ancient ſtates of Greece, being all territorial and having adjoining boundaries, anxiouſly ſtudied this ſyſtem of a balance, till the Macedonians became powerful enough to deſtroy it; when Alexander *inſtantly proceeded upon the conqueſt of the world*. When Rome afterwards had gained a certain aſcendency of power, foreign ſtates thought, that more was to be gained for themſelves by aiding, than by oppoſing her; till Rome deceiving them all, one after another, the world ſuffered *another* conqueſt, ſtill more complete than that under Alexander.—The want of ſtanding armies under the

feudal ſyſtem, with the multiplicity of ſeparate ſtates then exiſting, the badneſs of roads, the imperfection of ſhipping, and other cauſes, long rendered ſuperfluous in latter ages, any *permanent* attention to the balance of power in Europe; the policy of it being ſaid to have been firſt ſuggeſted to Richlieu by the Swediſh Oxenſtiern, who was not forgiven by his proud pupil, (according to hiſtory) for the merit of being the reviver of a doctrine, of all others *either* the moſt *frivolous or the moſt important.*—A war, as of late, projected by England for a fort at the ſouth-eaſtern corner of Europe; or a war, as at preſent, made to procure ſtipulations which may be had gratis, and without any war at all; theſe, I ſay, are wars, ſuch as the balance of power can never demand. But a war engaged in by us againſt France under actual circumſtances, as far as the mere balance of power is concerned, is a war made on the *wrong* ſide, at the moſt dangerous of moments; being a war not *for* but *againſt* the due balance of power; and conſequently worſe than frivolous and wanton, being infinitely impolitic.

Europe juſt now exhibits *four* ſuperior potentates.—Firſt, *Ruſſia*, which is naval, territorial, unaſſailable, and ambitious; which, to the uſual vigour of the north, and the approaching command of the wealth of the eaſt, joins the ſubtlety of female counſels; and whoſe population is already thirty millions, which are rapidly increaſing, (upon principles ſo ſignally exemplified in America and other *new* countries.) Next comes *Auſtria*, whoſe population is twenty millions, and alſo increaſing; whoſe only ſtudy is dominion; whoſe military ſyſtem is now attaining to great perfection; and who, by the proceedings in Poland is irrefragably convicted of being in concert with Ruſſia. Then follows *France* poſſeſſed of twenty-

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ſix millions of people, in a ſtate unneceſſary to deſcribe. Laſtly, we ſee *Great-Britain* and *Ireland*; containing twelve millions of people, and only a trifling army, having large foreign poſſeſſions indeed, but with which her navy alone forms the bond of union. Theſe are the only powers appearing in Europe of the *firſt* order; (for Pruſſia, Sweden, and Holland, have only accidentally and temporarily riſen into a high rank, and Spain has long and habitually fallen below her natural poſition.) Let us conſider alſo, that Ruſſia and Auſtria have the farther means, while they remain united, of incorporating into one or other of them, the territories of Poland and Turkey, and large tracts of Germany; the chief of which lie *excluſively* in their neighbourhood, and out of the reach of being defended by other nations.—Yet theſe two great confederating ſtates are ſupported by ourſelves, and by a multitude of powers of the ſecond and third orders, in an attempt to ſubdue and diſmember France; and this general combination againſt France, is called *preſerving* the balance of *power*.

Mr. Locke ſpeaks ſomewhere of perſons who are to be called *perſons of one idea*. They ſee one ſtep only at a time, and cannot recognize the ſecond till events brings it forward. They dread, for inſtance, the petty and already extinguiſhed danger from the licentiouſneſs of France, and forget the approaching coloſſal danger ſpringing from the deſpotiſm of uncontrolled *military* powers: they look at the inveigler only, and forget the robber. But politics require a cool head and an extenſive eye; they muſt be viewed with *temper* as to their immediate ſtate, and with *diligence* as to their ulterior conſequences; for as in war there is no room for *ſecond* miſtakes, it is the ſame with politics in moſt of its deeper caſes.

caſes.—If we mean, therefore, to guard againſt the *exerciſe* of univerſal dominion, now alone is our time, when we can preclude the *exiſtence* of it; for if we allow the power to be created, we as certainly create the will to uſe it; and bloody wars will be called for in an *attempt to undo* what neutrality alone would now with certainty *prevent*. In a ſhort time, things, which are ſo immenſe in their importance, may be out of our reach; for though we ſhall be allowed to aid *the war* againſt France, we cannot command either the time or the conditions of the *peace* with it, in caſe the continental powers ſhall overrun it. To command, indeed, a peace for Europe in ſpite of others, is in fact to be the *arbiter of Europe*: ſo that at the peace, we muſt either be lookers on, as being merely a naval power, as far as reſpects Europe; or like Penelope, we muſt unweave our web, and attempt to reinſtate France, if France is puſhed too far. Before, therefore we ſeek to annihilate France politically, and ſtill more before we throw her into the preponderating league, we muſt aſk whether we can ſeparate Auſtria and Ruſſia? whether we can wreſt Poland alſo from their graſp? whether we can protect the Turks? or can even preſerve inviolate from the confederacy the Germanic body and other petty kingdoms and ſtates of Europe?

Two or three difficulties may occur here:—as, firſt, that in this letter I have *ſcarcely noticed Pruſſia*. But does Pruſſia demand peculiar notice? If, after ſhe has helped to diſmember France, ſhe does not accommodate and become the obedient *ſervant* of Auſtria and Ruſſia, is it not clear, that ſhe is likely to be made their ſlave; unleſs Europe, upon recovering its ſenſes (of which Pruſſia is perhaps likely to be firſt to give the example) treads back its courſe of folly, and wages new wars in order again to reſtore the poiſes of Europe, ſo

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idly diſturbed?—Next, it may be conceived that France being our peculiar enemy, *it is wiſe to cripple her, ſince we may always truſt to our navy for our own protection* afterwards. The patrons then of this opinion are not ſatisfied with the following recent changes, *conſequent upon the new government* of France: namely, her total diſſolution of her alliances, as well with Auſtria, as with Spain; her ſecret contempt for her foreign poſſeſſions (now in a ſtate of intire confuſion;) and laſtly the general terror of France which is fixed in the minds of Europe.—They forget alſo the *double* view to be taken of France, as our old *rival*, and as a *component part of Europe*. As a *rival*, we have always been able to reſiſt her, though ſhe had always power enough to be a ſalutary check upon our own ambition; and we have reſiſted her, becauſe ſhe had trans-atlantic views, which led her into conteſts with our navy, and thus produced a vulnerability and gave us a hold over her, *which influenced her conduct even in her continental politics* to a degree, which we could not otherwiſe have expected. As a *component part of Europe*, France has been peculiarly uſeful to us; for ſhe has ſuffered none to attain that ſupereminence in Europe, to which ſhe has found it in vain herſelf to aſpire; and though ſhe has vexed us with intrigues, there was nothing in theſe to endanger either our exiſtence, or that of Europe, as long as ſhe held herſelf the general guardian of the whole, and eſpecially of the four weakeſt parts, (namely Poland, Turkey, independent Germany, and the Italian States.) It is indeed the more unfortunate, that we forget this double character of France; ſince nothing is more certain, than that ſhe had adopted pacific principles at the commencement of her revolution, which we might eaſily have encouraged, and by her means have rendered uni-

verſal to our own infinite advantage: But inſtead of this, ſhe has been forced into war, and into military principles, as well as into new extremes of democratic ones.—Blinded then by the ſmoke and vapour of French politics, we forget the real fire from an oppoſite quarter, that may ſoon devour Europe; and we go to war with France for ſpeeches and pamphlets (as Holland was formerly attacked for pamphlets and medals;) forgetting, that Meſſrs. Burke and Calonne have long been careſſed at Court, for their cruſading pamphlets; and that Mr. Burke, even in Parliament, has always furniſhed the earlieſt pretexts of this deſcription for hoſtility.—But America has given ſufficient proof, that we ought to overlook words ſpringing from paſſion; for, notwithſtanding the irritated ſtate of America ten years ago (which we have ſince taken ſo little pains to aſſuage,) the Vice-Preſident of the American Congreſs and his ſon, have each written in favour of the Engliſh Conſtitution, as oppoſed to that of France; the Secretary of State in America, alſo has loſt popularity with many from his great partiality to France; and Mr. Paine himſelf, by his oppoſition to the death of Louis XVI. has ſhewn, that even Democracy has bounds, wherever deſpair does not force men to overſtep them.—As to the omnipotence of our *Navy*, I ſhall only obſerve, firſt, that a Navy is more or leſs the neceſſary appendage of coaſts, and that the maſters of the whole of Europe, muſt at the ſame time be the maſters of its coaſts; next, that a Navy is ſubject to diſappointment from contrary winds, from calms, from ſtorms, and from uncertainty as to the motions of an enemy; and that after all, when ſo ſhort a trip is in queſtion, as the paſſage from the neighbouring ſhores of Europe, either to England or Ireland, leſs ſkill, leſs Navy, and leſs apparatus, are neceſſary, than for wars carried on acroſs

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the ocean; that a ſucceſsful landing may eaſily end in the deſtruction of our dock-yards and naval ſtores; and that when the enemy ſhall once have entered our country, there is not a ſingle fortreſs in its internal parts to oppoſe him.

Theſe arguments become the more urgent, if we reflect that Miniſtry *ſeem* not to be ſatisfied with a *caſual* co-operation with the confederates againſt France, but appear to be about to enliſt as confederates themſelves; or in other words, not content with *uſing the allies*, they ſeem willing to be *uſed by them*. I confeſs, I know none but *reſtraining* clauſes which ought to enter into any treaty with theſe allies; and for ſuch clauſes we are I fear too late, becauſe the war has already begun, and it is only *previous to it*, that we had much power for impoſing them.—There is a ſecond occaſion for uneaſineſs at the conduct of Miniſtry, namely, their *ſilence as to the terms of peace*; which, as the open declaration of theſe terms would be uſeful and honourable, looks as if they were deſigned to be rendered rigorous in proportion to ſucceſs; and the rather, as Miniſtry make frequent uſe of the word, "*barrier*," (that is, againſt the views of France) without telling us, whether they mean it in a metaphorical or direct, a political or territorial ſenſe. But if they deſign to ſtrip France of its Eaſtern and Southern boundaries, will they not render it a country weak and open to its *continental* neighbours, and therefore liable to the alarming fate of Poland?—Another objection which offers is, that (whether it ſhall happen by colluſion or deception,) it is clearly in the *power* of Ruſſia, during the preſent conflict, to eſtabliſh for herſelf certain poſts, which ſhall ſerve her as ſtepping ſtones, to enable her to reach, and to interfere with our immenſe Empire in the Eaſt-Indies.—Nor is it uſeleſs to remark,

that we are about to put ourſelves under the neceſſity of being the ſchool-miſtreſs of Spain, in her naval and military ſyſtems; our return received for which ſervices, in the caſe of Ruſſia, is now but too apparent.

But the following conſideration above all is here momentous.—Having already ſeen, that merely by reducing the *territory* of France, we ſhall diſturb the balance of Europe; it remains to be added, that this balance will alſo be affected, ſhould the confederacy reſtore the *old government* of France, even though without diminiſhing its territory. The Bourbon family cannot, in this caſe, attribute its return to power to Great-Britain, who has ſo long affected neutrality, and who has been ſuppoſed to have been actuated throughout by ſelfiſh, rather than by other motives; and who if ſhe gains and retains any of the foreign poſſeſſions of the Republic, will in the end excite jealouſy in the monarch of France; and if ſhe re-aſſigns them to the monarch, upon his reſtoration, will leave herſelf without any of the propoſed compenſations for her expenſive armaments, and fail in attaching to herſelf the royal debtor.—To Auſtria *alone* will be given the peculiar merit of the original favour. But, as we are taught by wiſe men, that a ſenſe of obligation ſeldom ſinks deep in the minds of princes, a more powerful motive than gratitude will be called for even towards Auſtria. It is not ſo much, however, in family relationſhip, that we ſhall find this new motive; though that will have conſiderable influence in behalf of that power;—But it will be found in the neceſſity of ſecuring a *continuance* of the aid of Auſtria; whoſe contiguity, ſtanding forces, and arbitrary form of government, enable her to adminiſter aſſiſtance with effect and eaſe, for the purpoſe of keeping ſubjugated the majority of the French nation, which will

either long remain refractory to monarchy, or at leaſt be ſuſpected of ſo doing by its monarch. Similar ſervices cannot be rendered to the Bourbon family by Great-Britain, even were ſhe inclined to that effect; as her ſtanding army is trifling; and the genius and publicity of her government muſt naturally be oppoſed to ſuch an employment of her reſources; unleſs we ſuppoſe (which would infinitely confirm all our more general arguments,) that in conſequence of the operation of the confederacy, our own government will become devoted to deſpotic purpoſes.—Thus the natural reſult of that degree of ſucceſs in the confederacy, which ſhall either enable it to diſmember France, or elſe to reſtore a Bourbon monarch in it, will be to violate the balance of power; for in the one view, the confederacy will derive ſtrength from the *ſpoils* of France; and in the other, from the voluntary and intereſted *concert* of its reſtored government in the cauſe of military deſpotiſm. —It is, therefore, among other reaſons, eſſential to our intereſt to procure an immediate and a general peace, leſt Auſtria ſhould gain ſuch an aſcendancy in France, as ſhall enable her either to reduce its territory, or remould its government; for ſhould ſhe once *acquire* that aſcendancy, and be ſupported in it by the confederates, it is difficult to ſay how Great-Britain can counteract it; ſince we have no influence in Europe, except in what reſpects the *ſeas*; the power of our *land-force* being nothing; and that of our *treaſure*, even when moſt laviſhed, being ſecondary, feeble, and uncertain, as may be known from hiſtory and reaſon.

I have thus produced the *firſt* of my *poſitive* arguments in favour of negotiation with France, promiſed in my laſt letter; having here ſhewn (merely by ſimpli-

fying our view of Europe) that in order to preſerve the *balance of power in Europe*, it is neceſſary to keep France entire.—When I explain the danger of a contrary ſyſtem, it is without affirming, that we may not eſcape the cataſtrophe ſuggeſted; for a prudent man does not delay his attempts to avoid an evil, *till it is proved to him to be thoroughly inevitable.*—It is enough to ſay, that it behooves us to place univerſal military deſpotiſm at as *many removes diſtant from us*, as is poſſible; and not to allow it to come ſo near, as that *one* farther eaſy combination ſhall alone be neceſſary, to enable it to overwhelm us; particularly when even the mere re-compoſition of Europe upon the moſt reaſonable new baſes, may produce ſevere wars; becauſe the ſeveral powers may be ſome time in *convincing* themſelves of their true relative ſituations under the new ſyſtem.

In my next letter, I ſhall produce my remaining objections to a too ſucceſsful war, all of which will ſerve as farther arguments for an *immediate* negotiation with France; which, if Miniſters have rendered impoſſible by any entanglement in conſequence of *recent* alliances, in my opinion, they have involved themſelves in a reſponſibility of the deepeſt die.

A CALM OBSERVER.

March 18, 1793.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Publiſhed April 10, 1793.

SIR,

WHILE Poland is in the act of being diſmembered by the military concert of princes, and while a ſimilar project is more than to be ſuſpected againſt France, we fight, we pray, and we faſt, that the wiſe and righteous plan may proſper, and call it, *preſerving the balance of power in Europe.*—Surely, to create a *preponderance* of power, is to deſtroy its *balance*; and to encourage a *concert* of princes, is contrary to the maxim which requires us to *divide* their ſtrength; and ſurely alſo, if the confederates can poſſeſs themſelves of Poland and France to day, it ſeems ſtrange not to perceive, that with additional eaſe they may cruſh Holland and Hanover to-morrow. A war, therefore, which is ſo contradictory to its own principles, as to be fatal to the general *balance of power* in proportion to its *ſucceſſes*, ought immediately to be terminated; and this has furniſhed our *firſt poſitive argument for negotiating with France.*

But there is another balance, for the preſervation of which we have invoked the war, and which the plenary *ſucceſs* of the war is equally likely to deſtroy; I mean the

balance of the Britiſh Conſtitution; and this conſideration will furniſh a *ſecond* motive for peace.

When M. de Lolme means to applaud our conſtitution, he ſpeaks of it as a machine balanced by its *own* weights; (ponderibus librata *ſuis*:) But I ſhall now ſhew, that a ſucceſsful concert of princes favours the introduction of *foreign* weights, in the place of theſe *native* ones; and thus tends, not only to diſturb the movements of our conſtitution, but to hazard its exiſtence.

Though I execrate faction, yet I am not polite enough to ſhun topics affecting our deareſt intereſts, becauſe they are diſcountenanced at court; and I ſhall therefore ſpeak of our domeſtic dangers from the war againſt France, with the freedom and impartiality, which are dictated by the hiſtory of man, and the importance of the ſubject, as well as by the real welfare of royalty itſelf.—If none then can deny, that power naturally ſeeks its own extenſion, and is able by its own exertions to accelerate its progreſs; if power is ſometimes violent, ſometimes crafty, and always irritable; ſometimes ſelf-deceived, but finally always ſelf-corrupted; if theſe are its properties among its moſt innocent poſſeſſors, by what title is it, that the various perſonages who ſucceed each other in rule in *this* country in particular, are to be deemed exempt from this rooted diſeaſe of the human breaſt? If ſuch then is the diſpoſition of ſovereigns in general to acquire power, (for ſovereigns are but men), let us now ſee the *facilities* offered for this purpoſe to our own ſovereigns in particular, in caſe of the ſubjugation of France by the concert of princes.

This brotherhood of ſovereigns, who have long ſtifled every remnant of liberty in their own dominions, and have leagued together to enſlave Poland, France, and other nations, will naturally rejoice to come into a temporary

porary underſtanding with the executive government of Great-Britain; for, till of late years, Great-Britain has been the active protector of liberty in the people, and of independence in the ſovereigns of Europe. If ſuch a deſire of connexion then, exiſts for the moment, on the part of the confederates, it only remains to demonſtrate, that the executive power of Great-Britain will *eaſily be enabled to meet their approaches* for eſtabliſhing that ſecret co-operation, to which we have ſuppoſed that its *own* inclinations will not long be found wanting.

It is the prerogative of the executive power of this empire to negotiate excluſively (through Miniſters of its own choice) with foreign ſovereigns; to form treaties, military and commercial, with them; to declare war and peace; to direct, and conſequently upon occaſion to defeat, the movements of our fleets and armies, (of which it appoints the leading officers;) and therefore to make all theſe meaſures ſubſervient to its private views, both poſitively and negatively, directly and circuitouſly. Theſe extenſive prerogatives acquire additional efficacy from the courtly doctrines reſpecting ſtate myſtery, and the implicit confidence ſaid to be due to government. And ſtill more are they aided by the powers, military and civil, with which the crown ſtands inveſted for internal purpoſes; and above all, by its conſtitutional inviolabity, by virtue of which in caſes of extremity, it can at any time, obtain an act of oblivion from the public, merely by ſacrificing a meaſure to their importunity, or a Miniſter to their reſentment. If the people have always had a doubtful, anxious ſtruggle with the crown, in conſequence of its actual powers, (which were lately declared to be increaſed, increaſing, and proper to be diminiſhed, and which have ſince moſt rapidly augmented;) will not the unreſiſting

reſiſting popular ſcale ſoon fly upwards to kick the beam, ſhould foreign aid pour its preponderating maſs into the rival ſcale?—If the *concert of princes*, by the very *novelty of its name*, proves the novelty of its exiſtence; can we ſhew, on the other ſide, that the Britiſh nation has received any *new* ſtrength, or any *new* ſource of ſecurity, to countervail the new enemy to be oppoſed to it? On the contrary, is it not more loudly than ever aſſerted, that the Britiſh people ſtands inſulated and interdicted by law, from all negotiations with foreigners; that it is equally illegal for it to combine at home within itſelf; that it may ſuffer, but can never act; that it may complain, but muſt do ſo openly; and that when it reſiſts, it is rebellion, and when it arms, it is treaſon?

The eaſe of a colluſion of our executive power with foreign princes, when once reſolved upon, will appear from recent examples. If the Stadtholder is falſely charged with having reluctantly employed, or ſecretly palſied, the efforts of his nation, during the late war with England; yet none can deny, that he afterwards quelled all *internal* oppoſition to himſelf, by the foreign aid of Pruſſia. The late conſtitutional king of France, (for with all our ſympathy for his memory we muſt confeſs it,) was either a paſſive witneſs, or the betrayed inſtrument, of a ſecret intelligence with foreign potentates, to which France had nearly fallen a victim; and the preſent incidents occurring in France, ſtill farther manifeſt the dangers to ariſe, when executive agents ceaſe to act in uniſon with the nation. Hiſtory abounds in ſimilar examples, in the liſt of which our two laſt kings of the Stuart race are notoriouſly to be included; and caſes of this deſcription would be ſtill more frequent, were the executive and legiſlative powers oftener lodged in different

different hands; but few, alas! are the countries ſufficiently free in their government for this to obtain in them.—But what makes the danger in our own particular caſe the greater, is the facility with which the fleets, which are to form our protection, may be kept unprepared, or be treacherouſly detained in port, or be made to elude the courſe of the enemy at ſea, or elſe be betrayed into his power; as well as the defenceleſs ſtate of theſe iſlands, when an enemy has once penetrated into them.—I ſay nothing of the ſucceſs of our *firſt* William, in conſequence of a ſingle victory at Haſtings; for the ſucceſs of our *third* William is ſtill more ſtrikingly in point; as he accompliſhed his landing under the cover of a trifling fleet, and poſſeſſed only a trifling land force. He had indeed the acting majority of the Engliſh nation with him at the commencement; but having diſappointed thoſe who were bigots either in church or ſtate, the majority of the Engliſh, and ſtill more certainly of the Scotch and Iriſh nations, were found hoſtile to him; and yet he not only upheld the revolution itſelf, but at the ſame time ſupported long, bloody, and expenſive foreign wars againſt the moſt formidable power in Europe: ſuch was the force of *poſſeſſion* with reſpect to the executive government, and of the influence of that government over the legiſlature, (of which the duration had been made *ſeptennial* with that view)!—The fears here ſuggeſted have appeared ſalutary to our anceſtors, at various periods, and under various aſpects. What was the great complaint, for example, againſt the Catholic religion and papal power, but that they led to a ſympathy and connexion with foreigners, both in the prince and in the ſubject? And is it not for the ſame reaſon, that the prince is diſabled from marrying a Catholic? Why has the admiſſion

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of Dutch, Heſſian, or Hanoverian troops upon Britiſh ſoil, been a conſtant object of jealouſy? Why are our army, and the laws which regulate, and the funds which ſupport it, each rendered ſubject to an annual negative from parliament? Why is our king, unleſs a *native*, diſqualified from making any but defenſive wars, without parliamentary conſent? Does not every thing prove the alarm which has always pervaded the nation, leſt it ſhould at any time fall into other hands than its own?—If a diſpute then ſhould unfortunately occur between the prince and people, and if the prince ſhould become reſolute from a conſciouſneſs of foreign reſources; ſurely, with powers previouſly "*exactly*" balanced, the executive government can eaſily open the road for weighty aſſiſtance from foreign parts, in order to enable him to turn the ſcale to the ſide of power?—This then is a *ſecond poſitive argument for peace* with France, becauſe France is the only bulwark beſides ourſelves to oppoſe to the conſequences of a too cloſe concord of military princes;—a concord, which none are more intereſted to deprecate than thoſe individuals among us, whoſe weight is only regarded when politics are nearly *balanced*, and whoſe value is only conſiderable in a ſyſtem of *influence*, but is altogether null in a ſyſtem of *force*.

A third poſitive argument, analogous to the preceding, ariſes from the preſent war being *directed againſt liberal ſyſtems*. The French having adopted ſome ridiculous popular principles, care is taken to attach an odiouſneſs to every thing like improvement; and ſince many advantages reſult from the regal and ariſtocratical ingredients in our conſtitution, theſe are pretended to be the only parts of it worth upholding. Thus, liberty is fatally ſtruck by a rebound, and power has incenſe

incenſe wafted to it by a ſide-wind; thus, under falſe names, we are led to calumniate liberty and to careſs tyranny; thus we are brought to view without exertion or notice, the fall of Poland, and the conſequent aggrandiſement of the confederated princes, merely becauſe theſe princes at the ſame time condeſcend to attack France; and thus finally, the career of arbitrary power is rendered practicable both within us and without us.—From theſe contaminating ſituations, peace would ſoon relieve us; and it therefore ought to be peculiarly deſired by thoſe, who affect an anxiety for an *equipoiſe* in the Britiſh conſtitution; and it ought not to be rejected even by the friends of power, becauſe this power is much more ſafely and wiſely to be promoted by quiet meaſures, than by violent plans which are of dubious iſſue.

There is *another* argument for negotiation, to be derived from the *poſſible danger of our ſeeking continental poſſeſſions*.—If attempts of this ſort prove abortive, we ſhall experience all the diſgrace, expence, and miſchiefs of a baffled undertaking for our labour.—If they ſucceed, we are then to aſk, whether the new acquiſitions are to be made for the crown itſelf, or for a junior branch of the royal family?

If for the *crown*, then a new familiarity muſt follow with arbitrary forms of government, both in the prince and in the ſubject; an immenſe patronage alſo will accrue to the executive power, or in other words, a new acceſſion of influence will go into the hands of thoſe, where too much influence (according to Judge Blackſtone) is lodged already; a certain extenſion of our military eſtabliſhment will moreover enſue, by which *force* will be added to an acknowledged *ſuperabundance*

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of influence; and laſtly, a mixture in continental broils and negotiations, in plots and counter-plots, in alternate ſtates of ambition and of terror, theſe and other miſchiefs muſt fill up the canvaſs of our new ſituation.——Are we not happily ſituated; and can we be better than at preſent? After a certain compaſs of dominion is attained, of what uſe is any augmentation of it to the prince, but to corrupt him; or to the ſubject, but to furniſh new means for his own oppreſſion? Does not our ſea-girt ſituation ſerve as a ſort of armour to us; and if we ſpread ourſelves upon the continent, does not that armour drop from us? and is it not true alſo, that there is a ſort of congruity in empires, and that if armies are ſuited to ſuch as are territorial, navies are particularly ſo to ſuch as are maritime?—Beſides, if we gain territory at the expence of France, in a moment of its internal diſtraction and foreign oppreſſion, does it at all follow that we ſhall afterwards retain it? Where (as has been excellently intimated) is the ancient Dukedom of Normandy: and where our wide conqueſts which coaſted the North and Weſt of France, and even reached towards her centre? The fame of our Edwards and of our Henrys, and our titular pretenſions to France, (the continuance of which ſhews the obſtinacy with which heraldic mummery holds to its laſt rags;) theſe are the only legacies we have obtained for all the blood and treaſure loſt to England, in tormenting France; to whom hiſtory ſcarcely attributes the receipt of a ſingle benefit from us, during our long intercourſe as conquerors, to ſerve in a compenſation for our injuries to it. England and France may be friends, but never can be happy under a common government; having agreement of manners enough only for *peace*, but too much diſſonance for *union*.——If it be ſaid, that arrangements may be formed

formed to give us a ſubſtitute upon the continent, for conqueſts made upon France: let it be replied, that upon this ſuppoſition, we muſt continue in the war, at an unknown expence, till the other powers are ſatisfied on *their* ſide; that our Elizabeth long ago wiſely rejected the ſovereignty of the Low Countries; that Hanover has ſeldom ſerved any other purpoſe, than to implicate us in foreign quarrels, and render us vulnerable at ſecond hand by continental powers; that this muſt be ſtill more true of any dominion (and eſpecially a ſmall one) with a diſputed title; and conſequently that the probable end of ſuch an impolitic and dear-bought acquiſition, will be either its abandonment by the national conſent, or by the connivance of the executive power, of which Dunkirk is a memorable example.

If the new poſſeſſion thus aimed at by the war is to go to a *junior Britiſh prince*, the pretended advantages of the conqueſt may be for another, and the evils of it for ourſelves. We may have to perform the office of an ally; and marriage, ambition, fear, or other motives, may ſooner or later produce a ſeparation, if not an alienation of intereſts and inclinations.—Happy would it be in ſuch a caſe, if this want of junction were complete; but the apprehenſion would be, that however *national* intereſts might be kept aſunder, yet ſince habitual rivals, like Pruſſia and Auſtria, can unite to form a *concert of princes* for the "honour and dignity of "crowns;" it will be ſtill more eaſy in this caſe for a new *family compact* to be formed, the terms of which ſhould be like that of the Houſe of Bourbon, for the "views "of their courts," "the proſperity of their royal "families," and "the ſupport on every occaſion what-"ever of the dignity and rights of their houſes." Such

a compact cannot exist in words, while our constitution lasts, but it may exist in effect; and if it is made an instrument for dissolving our constitution, it may then exist in form, and with no other secrecy annexed to it, than policy with regard to *other* princes may require.

Various other considerations flow in upon us to persuade us to negotiate with France: but I must reserve them for another letter.

A CALM OBSERVER.

April 17, 1793.

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LETTER IX.

Publiſhed April 29, and May 2 and 4, 1793.

SIR,

THERE are ſeveral miſcellaneous arguments which remain to be urged even againſt the moſt *victorious* iſſue that can be expected to our war with France; but I ſhall incorporate them all into the following GENERAL VIEW of the oſtenſible *cauſes*, and of the *nature of the war*, and of the *motives for a peace*.—It is neceſſary, however, that a ſhort *narrative* ſhould precede.

It is four years ſince the great nation of France, which we once affected to commiſerate for its want of liberty, reſolved to poſſeſs that great and fertile bleſſing. The old governments of Europe, fearing an extenſion of this event to their own dominions, viewed the revolution with extreme anxiety; but the conduct of Louis XVI. gave them no pretext for interfering, till his flight occurred in June 1791. Then it was that covered fears and doubts were changed into ſullen reſerve, interrupted intercourſe, ſecret leagues, or menacing preparations; and the only return which the King's notification of his ſubſequent acceptance of the conſtitution procured from foreign courts, was the expreſſion of mere perſonal civility and ſympathy to himſelf. This dark behaviour naturally produced in the French reciprocal jealouſies, not only of foreign potentates, but of the King; which were much increaſed by the Queen being of the houſe of Auſtria, by the retreat of the Royal Family, and by the countenance every where ſhewn to French Emigrants.—A raſh demur on the part of the French legiſlature,

(which was afterwards retracted) reſpecting the phraſeology to be uſed in addreſſing the King, led the Emperor to employ threats for the purpoſe of *repreſſing* ſallies, which confidence in the King would far more eaſily have *prevented*. Matters were now precipitated in France to a pitch of general irritation; and the nation judging of the King's inclinations by thoſe of all his friends, both within and without the kingdom, and fearing thence a new repentance on his part, no longer obſerved any terms with Auſtria. The nominal alliance with that power became in conſequence diſcuſſed and condemned, and explanations as to her immediate intentions were peremptorily demanded.—All ſatisfaction being refuſed, and the torch of war being thus lighted, France thought it ſafeſt to be the firſt to brandiſh it.

During this interval, the phenomenon of the French revolution had produced a counter-phenomenon in the connection of Pruſſia and Auſtria; firſt ſuggeſted perhaps for domeſtic and defenſive purpoſes; but the diſtractions of France ſoon leading to foreign and offenſive projects, it was made to refer not only to their reſpective ſubjects at home, but to their weaker neighbours abroad. The eager acceſſion of Ruſſia to this compact, was never to be doubted; and the almoſt incredible infanity of the French democrats ſoon placing the royal colleagues at their eaſe as to any danger from their principles, nothing now remained as a ſubject for their co-operation, but *foreign* concerns. Whether Pruſſia was as ſincere in ſeconding Auſtria in the firſt moments of her conteſt with France, as ſhe was originally officious in inducing her to begin it, is of little moment, as Pruſſia has at leaſt ſhewn herſelf in earneſt as to *her ſhare of the plunder*; having, in conjunction with Ruſſia, over-run the whole of Poland.

France,

France, in the laſt campaign, had met with ſome temporary ſucceſs, and being embarraſſed how to profit by it conſiſtently with her renunciation of foreign conqueſts, and finding herſelf at the ſame time an *univerſal* object of hoſtility, ſhe reſolved upon the expedient of a ſyſtem of *fraternity with foreign people.—Savoy* (which had been attacked upon the ſame principle on which we had attacked Holland during the American war) was with little difficulty at the moment incorporated with France, under this new rule.—But as all rules, where the party which applies them is the party to profit by them, are naturally perverted, violence was uſed to detach the *Belgians* from their ancient conſtitution, in order to produce their union with France. At the ſame time to conciliate the exaſperated Belgians for this injury, they had the free navigation of the Scheldt held out in proſpect to allure them.—It was the proffer of this bribe, which brought upon the carpet an altercation with *England*; who undertook, though unſolicited, to be the patron of *Holland* upon this long diſputed ſubject. The French, who were not miſtaken as to the apathy of the *Dutch themſelves* reſpecting the Scheldt, now became ſeriouſly alarmed; for they had always reſpected both the power and the character of *England*. They were therefore to the laſt degree anxious to negotiate:—but various leading perſonages in England had motives of another deſcription for checking ſuch negotiation.

It is needleſs to inquire minutely after the *cauſes* or the *ſolution* of theſe objections; for time has removed the *objections themſelves*, as far as they are fair and worthy notice.—The French, for example, have mixed ſuch abſurdity and injuſtice with their political doctrines, that theſe doctrines have ceaſed to be infectious. The

French are themſelves alſo convinced experimentally, of the folly of their plan of proſelytiſm and fraternity; which has plunged them into immenſe difficulties, has rendered them univerſally odious or ſuſpected, and no longer appears the philoſopher's ſtone in politics calculated to reſtore the golden age. The crime of *replying* to the addreſſes of felicitation received from Engliſh ſubjects, has equally fallen to the ground, for the ſame and other reaſons; and this affront deſerved the leſs animadverſion, even while it ſubſiſted, as our executive government had omitted both to puniſh the parties concerned in theſe addreſſes, and to caution the French not to communicate with them; as well as manifeſted at this period, the moſt ſignal averſion to the new French government. Laſtly, the French have now abandoned the Low Countries, and of conſequence the controverſy regarding the Scheldt; and the Dutch do not appear averſe on their part, to abſolve them from all offences under this head. We paſs over the pretended atheiſm of the French nation, becauſe were the charge true, the evil is not to be cured by war; and, like the charge of cruelty to the King, and other charges of an *internal* nature, it is wholly foreign to our cognizance.—The objection however here alluded to, made ſufficient impreſſion in England, at the moment, to end in a rupture with France;—of which I muſt reſt the blame more immediately with ourſelves; becauſe when a negotiation, which was faſt ripening itſelf to a happy iſſue by conceſſions on the ſide of France, was interrupted by our withdrawing the cuſtomary and neceſſary ſafeguard to the papers, meſſengers, and even perſon of the negotiator, and finally by an order for his departure; the war, though *declared* by France, was in that ſtage of it really *made* by ourſelves. In the midſt of an armed negotiation,

and of expreſſions the moſt opprobrious, and of a temper the moſt hoſtile, on our ſide, this interruption of the communication was not only, (judging according to all precedent) a natural *provocative* to hoſtilities, but alſo nearly as certain a ground for *apprehending* them, as an actual aggreſſion; ſo as to leave little to France but the mere prudential conſideration of the *time* of commencing the war, and the merit of a frank, *public declaration* of their deciſion upon the ſubject.

Such then is the *origin* of the war in which we are engaged, and the preſent ſtate of the *cauſes* which are ſaid to have produced it.

As to the *nature* of the war, it is of a varied deſcription.—Firſt, it is to be conſidered as a ſimple war *againſt a neighbour;* and in this light, it differs only from other ſimilar wars, by being more than uſually unneceſſary; inaſmuch as France has not only diſſolved her *family compacts* with the two houſes of Bourbon and Auſtria; but is actually at war with each of them, as well as with other additional powers, without poſſeſſing the ſhadow of an ally; at the ſame time, that a complete diſtraction reigns throughout her empire.—*Next*, it is a war againſt the only continental power likely to *oppoſe, with effect, the military concert of Princes*, by whom the independence of Europe is now more than endangered.—And the alarm hence would be univerſal, were not the ſlighteſt ſhade of democracy more terrifying to many, than even deſpotiſm or conqueſt. The war therefore in the *third* place, is referable to our own *internal* ſituation, and may be viewed as a war againſt *principles*, that is, againſt popular authors and popular clubs; and to employ war for the purpoſe of attacking that, of which the conſequences are

ſo eaſily ſubdued by domeſtic means, is like breaking a butterfly upon the wheel.—But the war has a *fourth* aſpect, namely, an interference with the *internal ſituation of France*, ſometimes under the name of benevolence, and ſometimes of chaſtiſement. Mr. PITT has indeed, at laſt, made this a ſubordinate motive; but ſince, with the confederates, it ſeems a primary one, it muſt *in effect* in ſuch caſe, be primary with us, who are merely ſecondary in the conduct of the war and in the arrangement of the general peace. None will doubt the ſincerity of the confederates on the ſubject of *chaſtiſement*; but thoſe who are ſponſors for any *benevolence* to be found in our cruſading companions, muſt be referred to the ſpecimens of benevolence of theſe princes ſhewn, as well as to their *own native* ſubjects, as to the Poles; likewiſe to the ſeveral manifeſtos of the Duke of Brunſwick and of the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg; and to the celebrated *family compact*, where the nations ruled by the Bourbons, are literally treated as mere *nothings*, unleſs as being the *appendages to their thrones*.—*Laſtly*, the war may become a war for *aggrandizement*; for though I have never charged this as the plan of our adminiſtration, yet it is not wiſe to let their virtue run the riſk of being over-tempted, eſpecially as the preſent miniſters may be diſplaced by others. When a nation is ſtrong enough (as our own certainly is, with reſpect to France) to defend itſelf, it is ſtrong enough for every *uſeful and juſt* purpoſe; and all ſurplus power only begets that preſumption, by which the blood and labour of one people are ſpent in occaſioning ſimilar loſſes to another; and whether conqueſts in this caſe are really effected or are only attempted, they do permanent injury to the two people, and no leſs tend to corrupt their governments.

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All encouragement to continue the war ariſing from the conſideration of its aſſigned cauſes and of its aſpects, being thus alike deficient, we now proceed to a *curſory general view* of the *poſitive motives* operating for peace.

We find from experience unhappily, that war in England is made with too much alacrity, and peace with too much reluctance; in defiance of the adage, which generally ſpeaking is ſo true; namely, that the worſt peace is better than the beſt war.—How ſhocking, for example, a wound appears in private life, with its concomitant ſurgical operations; how feelingly we deplore any caſe of diſeaſe; and how ſincerely we pity ſeparated relatives, where misfortune or death may befall the abſent? Sleepleſs nights alſo, hunger, impriſonment, and haraſſing alarms; with ſtagnated induſtry, oppreſſive taxes, inſult, robbery, devaſtation, fire, murder, and rape; ſuch a catalogue as this, impreſſes us all when exhibited in given *individual* inſtances. Ought not our feeling to be in proportion, then, when theſe evils become the *accumulated* lot of the whole *armies* and *nations?*—Is our ſympathy to abate, becauſe confounded with the extent and variety of the woe, we can no longer lend our attention to its particulars; and is the miſchief in fact the leſs endured by others, becauſe not ſcrutinized by ourſelves?—If we ſhould aſk indeed here, why all this maſs of evil cauſed by war, is voluntarily added to that, which is inſeparable from the lot of man; we ſhall find, that it is merely that ſome individuals may render our race the ſport of fate, in order that they themſelves may try the lottery of fortune? Thus we are made the *ſtake*, and they the *gamblers*.—And if the parties benefited

themſelves in this caſe, one would the leſs marvel; but what are we to ſay, when we commonly perceive them at the end of a war, reſtoring things, by mutual conſent, to their exact original poſition, except what regards the mutual immenſe expenditure and injury occurring during the conteſt. How happy then for us all, if our rulers had never dreamed of making uſe of this falſe road to happineſs through carnage and deſolation; and if they had, inſtead of it, availed themſelves of their command of our labour, our perſons, and our treaſure, in order to prepare for themſelves a ſuperior gratification by peaceful methods! But this would have required thought in thoſe, who prefer command; and moderation and patience in thoſe, whoſe paſſions are irritable.—But, to ceaſe moralizing, let us now advert to the *peculiar* motives calling for a peace with France, of which we have promiſed to give a general view.

The *firſt* argument which I have to recall to memory, is itſelf an exception to ſome of the facts juſt recited, becauſe it is founded upon a *new ſituation of human affairs*; namely, the *certainty* with which Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia, can combine to aſſume large dominions, *free of coſt and trouble*.—Theſe potentates are maſters of the grand Archimedian ſecret for drawing the world after them; being about to poſſeſs for their prop or fulcrum, nearly *one million of the fineſt land forces in the univerſe*; of which the operations are facilitated by the circumſtance, of the richeſt and weakeſt parts of Europe and of Weſtern Aſia lying *excluſively contiguous* to them, and being *excluſively open to a land force*. Poland, which has been "numbered and finiſhed," and "weighed in "their balances and found wanting," Poland, guiltleſs Poland, has proved, that theſe three powers have no

longer

longer occaſion to wait for the *conſent* of any others beſides themſelves; for if they can already ſucceſsfully diſſever Poland, this new acceſſion of ſtrength will enable them ſtill more fearleſsly and certainly to ſeize upon other territories; every new ſtep (as in the accelerated progreſs of gravitating motions,) adding freſh momentum to a power already irreſiſtible.—Will Frankfort, for example, with its plebeian, and therefore proſcribed, government, be more reſpected by them, than Dantzic; or will the other fractional parts of *Germany*, be beyond another reſidue of Poland? Long has *Sweden* experienced the ſcandalous intrigues and inſults of Ruſſia, and ſtill longer has *Denmark* groaned in ſecret under the weight of her more deciſive commands. As to Auſtria (to ſay nothing here of Pruſſia,) ſhe has in all ages found it eaſy to penetrate into *Italy*, where ſhe has already obtained an important footing; and will naturally feel tempted no longer to ſuffer her titles of "Emperor" and "King "of the Romans," to remain dead letters. Nor can *Holland* long withſtand a formidable army (eſpecially one capable of entering her Eaſtern frontier;) Holland, to whom the Duke of Brunſwick and Dumourier have given ſuch recent proofs of her inertneſs reſpecting foreign powers, under preſent circumſtances.—Formidable indeed are the three potentates, who have thus combined to create one general priſon for all mankind. They already poſſeſs ſome ſixty millions of people (of which more than half are in a ſtate of progreſſive increaſe, like the North Americans,) and as many more either aid their plans, or will become the victims of their ſucceſſes. Ruſſia bold and taunting; Auſtria haughty and relentleſs; Pruſſia buſy and deceitful; theſe are the triumvirs, who beſtride our narrow world, and to whoſe *mercy* alone we may ſoon have all to truſt.

truſt. And yet Britain, though ſhe ſees that they are joined upon a ſyſtem which goes to divide Europe piece-meal, ſtands like a waiting-lacquey, to ſerve at the repaſt; humbly hoping that crumbs may fall to form her "*indemnification.*"

How different this, from the proud times, when Britain, under Marlborough, "rode in the whirlwind, to *direct* "the ſtorm?" How different, from the nobler taſk of maintaining the liberties and equilibrium of Europe?—But our degradation in this reſpect is, if poſſible, outdone by our *imprudence*. Europe is at preſent, by peculiar circumſtances, brought, as it were, into a ſtate of univerſal contact, and digeſted into a vaſt focus of intimate communication; in which therefore, the relative influence of preponderating ſtates is more than ever important. On this great theatre of aſſembled mankind, the triumvirs are the leading actors; under whom Britain, Spain, Holland, Sardinia, Portugal, and the German empire, condeſcend to play parts, important perhaps to the cataſtrophe, but in every other reſpect at once ſubordinate and burthenſome. The ſcenery indeed appears laid in France, but *behind the ſcenes*, as it were, the triumvirs are ſeizing other plunder; and every year may diſcover ſome new enormity, which by the rule of proportions, we ſhall be leſs and leſs able to repreſs.—Our ſlender army; our navy (which can only undertake partial *coaſting* operations, and which may every where be *eluded* by a ſhort retreat within land;) theſe ſurely are not the means of ſhielding the vaſt *continents* of Europe and of Weſtern Aſia, from the graſp of the triumvirs?—The *land force of France* is what alone can enable us to ſtem the mighty torrent of their armies; of France, whom it is the faſhion to wiſh weakened and perhaps exterminated.

At

At preſent then, the propriety of the queſtion of peace or war, under its *foreign* aſpect is reduced to this ſingle conſideration.—Is it fit to have France only to fear, or the triumvirs; to have an occaſional and weak enemy, or a conſtant and deadly one; an enemy which vainly ſeeks to ſteal diſtant forts and factories, or an enemy which actually devours kingdoms? In other words, if any of us had a conteſt with a common antagoniſt, and a wild beaſt ſhould ſuddenly ruſh into view, would it be prudent to continue to wrangle with the party, and even to throw him proſtrate to be firſt devoured, inſtead of making common cauſe with him againſt the common danger?—During the preſent century, we have loſt no territory to France, even though ſhe has been ſupported by Spain, Holland, and America; but have regularly gained ground upon her. On the other hand, the triumvirs have of late years been large and conſtant accumulators of power; and the obſerving eye can ſee no traces of any *returning footſteps* from their fatal den; for if they loſe any thing, it is only to one another; and their internal balance whenever thus diſturbed, is ſoon re-adjuſted, by means of new plunder raviſhed from their defenceleſs neighbours.—What weakneſs then is it in us, reſentfully to purſue the *ignis fatuus* of French politics into ſwamps and quagmires, without obſerving the flaming maſs of lava which is not only formed, but pouring forth behind us? Shall we dread the froth and foam, the noiſe and fury of the wave, which beats but without overpaſſing the rock on which we ſtand; and neglect the *tide* of power, which is ſilently riſing to overwhelm us? Shall we be afraid of the ſtrength depending upon fever and convulſion, and view with unconcern, that which depends upon fixed ſtamina and conſtitutional habit? Shall we only ſtruggle againſt the

ſmaller

ſmaller evils which France has it *not in her power* to accompliſh, and has even *ceaſed to threaten*; rather than againſt the greater ones, which the triumvirs can certainly produce, whenever they have but the inclination, and their *ſecrecy* reſpecting which renders but the more certain? Shall we be terrified at the *diſcords* of France, and not be alarmed at the *union* of free-booters; when the triteſt of proverbs tells us, that the honeſt have always ſomething to fear, whenever thoſe who are leſs honeſt *agree too well?*—Beſides, if we help to *diſmember* France, will it not both directly and indirectly tend to ſtrengthen the triumvirs? And if we keep France *united* under a Monarch, will it not be to render her our rival again, under any new form of government with which ſhe ſhall afterwards re-appear, aided perhaps by the triumvirs? Will not every ſucceeding proprietor of the eſtate ſtruggle for the integrity of the premiſes, and for the reinſtatement of all its appendages; and when he has recovered what is wanting to it, will not his next meaſure be, as uſual, to pant after freſh acceſſions to it, as if there had been no interruption whatever in the poſſeſſion?—So that, if *foreign* politics alone conſtitute the foundation of the war, now that our allies are ſecured, every motive of a *defenſive* nature ſeems to lead to a ceſſation of hoſtilities againſt France, to be replaced by a firm and watchful conduct towards the triumvirs; particularly, as the precaution on our part would encourage other powers to reſume their ſenſes or their free-agency, and to adopt a ſimilar proceeding.

Three *objections*, however, may ariſe to this compariſon between France and the triumvirs, to which I ſhall reſpectively anſwer.—Firſt, it is ſuppoſed, that France the *republic* is more dangerous, than France the *monarchy*; or, in other words, that France when herſelf

rejecting

rejecting all alliance, when rejected alſo by all allies, when transferring her allies to us, and when deſpiſing maritime ſyſtems; is more formidable to us, than is France under the very different circumſtances, of being armed with family compacts, and being capable of procuring allies to herſelf at will, and of extending her dominions largely beyond the ſeas!—Such a fear is ſurely *unbecoming* in Great-Britain, who has even found it uſeful to have a rival in order to moderate her ambition; who, when not too preſumptuous in her conduct, or too proſperous in her condition, is always ſure, in a juſt cauſe, to find allies; and whoſe navy has always ſucceſsfully reſiſted and generally overcome, the largeſt collection of maritime force ever ſeen upon the ſeas. And the ſentiment is moreover *unreaſonable*, if (as I will always contend) it has been in our power to incline France, the republic, to eſtabliſh pacific ſyſtems both for herſelf and for Europe.—This general argument is confirmed, upon the ſuppoſition of the reſtoration of the monarchy, by its being within the power of chance, that *Sardinia ſhould paſs into the Bourbon family*; and ſtill more ſo, that the union of the Bourbon and *Auſtrian* families ſhould become more intimate than formerly; ſo as to render the French power, more than ever formidable. Beſides, the reſtoration of the monarchy would, *ipſo facto*, throw immenſe weight into the hands of Auſtria, the immediate author and the neceſſary guardian of the change ſuppoſed to be effected.—— However ſlight may be the poſitive effects of family alliances between Princes, yet ſince their negative effects at leaſt are commonly not ſo trifling, the danger is become both ways greater than ever; becauſe, the preſent increaſing relationſhip of a few of the more *powerful* royal families, and the increaſing *conſolidation of territory* under

under them, ſtrengthens the temptation to political unions formed on the baſis of family (which was ſo little experienced in periods of antiquity,) and highly renders ſuch unions dangerous to the proſperity of the human race.—As to the evil operation of a republic upon us, in an *internal* view; if we are to judge from the circle of experience of the *laſt four* years in France, and from common ſenſe; it is much more for the intereſt of our crown and our ariſtocracy, that France ſhould have a democratic republic, which ſhall become diſguſting by its proceedings, and alſo foreign to our imitation on account of the fundamental differences in our reſpective conſtitutions; rather than a limited monarchy, conducted with decency, and affording precedents and maxims ſufficiently analogous to demand our adoption.—In deſiring that a negative conduct may be obſerved towards the French republic, I truſt, that no ungenerous interpretation will be made, as to my own ſentiments, reſpecting England. I ſpeak of the government of another country, with a view to our *politics*; and under ſuch circumſtances, the conduct of Louis XVI. in encouraging the *democratic* parties in Holland and America, will not only furniſh a precedent ſufficiently *impartial* to abſolve me; but prove, that in caſe of political ſtruggles in this country, a French monarch poſſibly may not ſupport the monarchy, or the ariſtocracy of England, with any greater zeal, than is expected from the French republic.

The next objection to my compariſon between the triumvirate and France is, that the *danger* from the triumvirate is ſo *imaginary* or ſo *remote*, as not to be comparable to the preſent danger occurring from France. —I reply, however, that conquerors at all times have long arms; and that the very nature of a general con-

queſt, is to make itſelf perpetually approach to us, by the abſorption of intervening dominions; till at laſt, the triumvirs ſhall by a territorial progreſs, reach and ſeize the ſhores oppoſite to our iſland, with all the *navy depending upon them.* Suppoſing France, at the ſame period, either to be leagued with, or to be ſubject to the triumvirs, our danger from France will be the very ſame as at preſent; except, that it will have all the aggravation to it, to ariſe from the added power and the execrable principles of the triumvirs.—But when theſe dangers are ſaid to be *remote*, what is the reſpite of a few years to thoſe of us, who are young or who have poſterity; or to a conſtitution, of which we ſay, with ſuch apparent fervency, *eſto perpetua?*—And let no frail hopes, on this occaſion, be placed upon our navy or our wealth; for, beyond a certain point, as we may learn from hiſtory, the land has always overcome the ſea, and iron has always maſtered gold; of which the conteſt between Rome and Carthage, has furniſhed the double example.—Nothing then is ſafe but precaution; and if we leave any thing to fortune, we almoſt deſerve to be left to ourſelves. It will indeed be a new thing, if our *credulity* is to form our ſafeguard; and if no further revolutions are to happen in the world, merely becauſe we do not condeſcend to expect them.——As the final reſult of the *ſyſtem of the triumvirs* ought to excite our utmoſt terror, let us here, for a moment, review the nature of it. It is *unjuſt*, becauſe it makes no more account of the conſent of mankind, than if they were herds of cattle: it is *military*, and like every thing founded upon force, muſt either begin or end in being brutal: it is *univerſal*, and therefore will ſoon deprive itſelf of the checks both of public opinion and of education, as well as of juſtice: it is *capricious*, becauſe

cauſe it is guided by paſſion, as was inſtanced by the Roman Emperors, when maddened by the poiſon of power of their own preparing: it is *oppreſſive to every rank*, not excepting the higheſt, the moſt ſacred, or the moſt uſeful, nor even the army itſelf: it endangers the ſecurity of its own *authors and of their families*, as is found from the hiſtory of the Emperors of Rome, Ruſſia and Morocco: it is *permanent*, becauſe when deſpotiſm, though but for a ſingle age, ſtretches acroſs the world every where to intercept truth and knowledge, and to circulate falſehood, regeneration muſt be ſlow, (owing to the *vis inertiæ* of the human character, when in its degraded ſtate:) nay, it is even *remedileſs*, becauſe military powers being always armed, and always able to aſſiſt each other with the force of their whole nations, they can eaſily overpower the repugnance of any ſingle nation; eſpecially as the ſubjects of each ſtate are not only inſulated from their neighbours, but commonly ſeparated among themſelves by languages, manners, prejudices, and intereſts.

The *third* objection to the ſtatement I have made of the comparative danger of the triumvirate, beyond that of France, is that the parties in it, who have now ſo eaſily agreed, will ſoon as *eaſily quarrel;* and thus releaſe us again from our apprehenſions.—But did not two ſets of republican triumvirs ſucceſſively diſagree at Rome, after having firſt acted long enough in concert to ruin that empire? And though the triumph of the weaker triumvirs was ſhort lived, yet the triumph of the deſpotiſm which followed the two triumvirates, under the ſurviving triumvirs, laſted many centuries; and before its effects upon Europe and mankind are yet fully worn away, we are now encouraging the birth and progreſs of a royal triumvirate, ſtill more extenſive

ſive than the preceding.—The ſecret principle of the preſent triumvirs is eaſily made apparent, and their late renewal of their connection is a proof of the force of it. They ſee (along with better men) the folly of an *equal* war, which leaves each party as it found it, except as to the loſs produced by the ſtruggle; and therefore they wiſh to ſatisfy their ambition in another and more intelligent manner. Placed, as they are, in the midſt of a wilderneſs of weakneſs in their ſurrounding neighbours, they take as much ſpoil at a time from each, as the patience of Europe at the moment permits; and when the ſurprize of each act of iniquity ſubſides, they return to the inexhauſtible banquet, till at laſt, their gigantic powers will render any farther prudence on their ſide ſuperfluous.—Their firſt robbery on Poland was no longer back than in 1773; and they would have quarrelled about the diviſion, had not additional encroachments furniſhed the make-weights to poiſe the ſcales anew. At the late treaty reſpecting the Turks, the doctrine of *compenſation and fraternity* was as regularly ſettled as it was in the family compact of the Bourbons; Auſtria having liberty given to her to pillage the Turks, upon paying a due conſideration for the permiſſion, to their *faithful Chriſtian ally of Pruſſia*. Though ſeveral intermediate conteſts have chequered theſe proceedings, they have not, as we perceive, prevented a new partition of Poland in 1793; and if the triumvirs quarrel again, it may only end, like the quarrels of lovers, in new fondneſs and freſh mutual indulgence. Or, if it ends in the ruin of either of them, it will only place the general maſs of their power at the diſpoſal of *two* maſters, inſtead of *three*. Great potentates indeed, like Auſtria and Ruſſia, even when at their loweſt ebb, can always at leaſt defend

themſelves, and in favourable times can augment their dominion; but Pruſſia, not being of a magnitude to ſurvive negligencies, it may fall to the lot of the remainder of Europe, in caſe of her diſtreſs, to fight *her* battles in addition to their own.—But to ſum up what reſpects the triumvirs in a ſingle word, let us aſk if they had juſt now decided to divide between them both the *whole* of Poland with the whole of Turkey, what is there in the preſent ſtate of Europe which could *prevent them?* And after having well digeſted this immenſe incorporation of territory and power, would they not in another encouraging moment of European folly, be enabled to make a farther ſimilar arrangement, founded on the plunder of *Germany?*—And this being once effected, is there any counter-combination poſſible in Europe, which could ſtay their farther progreſs?—— If this be allowed to be true, then I affirm, that the *triumvirs are confeſſedly, more dangerous than France.*

Such are my motives for dreading the triumvirate, and ſuch is *one* reaſon offered for negotiating with France, even upon the ſuppoſition of our ſucceſs, and before things can have gone too far; (for it is difficult to arreſt great bodies like France, in their fall, or like the triumvirate in their riſe.)—If we are afraid of *novelties*, in truth, and not by way of pretext, nothing can be more ſuitable, than a policy which retains things in that ſituation, which we have ſo long experienced and underſtood, and can ſo eaſily manage.—To look for plunder, is in itſelf unjuſt; to look for the indemnity pretended to be due to us, is an unprofitable ſpeculation, eſpecially to an empire of a magnitude like our own; and not to ſeek for *ſecurity againſt the real and efficient enemies of all Europe*, at the preſent criſis, is madneſs. We are ſcarcely in time for ſafe meaſures on theſe ſubjects

jects to-day, and we may certainly be too late for them to-morrow.—It ought therefore immediately to be ſignified by us, in ſome deciſive manner, that the triumvirs are to obtain no *gains* whatever, for their partnerſhip-account, out of France; a ſtipulation which would come from us with an ill grace, if *we* ſought any ſuch gains ourſelves.—Nor ſhould the triumvirs, if poſſible, be permitted, even by means of *exchanges*, to arrange their dominions in any forms more commodious to themſelves, than the preſent; becauſe they can only deſire this to *ſtrengthen* themſelves, which ought to render the meaſure objectionable to us. Were *their* intentions pacific, ſuch exchanges would contribute to the general peace of Europe; but in their preſent temper, it is ſurely ſome pledge, for example, for the good behaviour of Auſtria, to have the Low Countries kept as her poſſeſſion, under the check of England, France, Holland, Pruſſia, and the German empire, who are all more or leſs contiguous to them; and above all, to have them remain unfortified by any new barrier to be wreſted from France. And if the triumvirs are to be denied exchanges, then by a parity of principle, exchanges muſt alſo be denied to *us*.—And if the triumvirs are thus denied both conqueſts and exchanges, and if France is appealed to while ſhe has energy left to ſupport us in theſe principles; the cruſade againſt France will ſoon terminate of itſelf, for want of motive.

The preceding reaſonings, for cloſing the war with France without delay, drawn from the ſtate of foreign affairs, ſeem convincing; and the *conſtitutional* motives for the ſame object, might equally be made to appear ſo; but, for the ſake of brevity, I ſhall truſt chiefly to former diſcuſſions for conviction upon this occaſion.—With reſpect to the *Crown*, I ſhall only obſerve at

preſent, that as long as the crown remains true to the nation, it muſt be employed in a conſtant conteſt *with the royal triumvirs;* ſince Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia, are proceeding upon ſyſtems utterly deſtructive to human happineſs and ſecurity. On the other hand, if the crown comes into intelligence with theſe triumvirs, with a view, through their aid, to oppreſs our own liberties, the crown muſt then be in conſtant conteſt *with the nation.* The former ſituation would of the two, be by far the leaſt deplorable for the crown; for, while the difference between one *degree* of royal power and another, is ſmall as to real happineſs and *enjoyment;* a reaſonable ſhare of power in the crown, is alſo that which is beſt ſuited to inſure its own durability and tranquillity; eſpecially, when all the improper increaſe of it which the crown can obtain through this channel, muſt afterwards reſt for its baſis, on the hazardous foundation of the ſincerity of the triumvirs.—With reſpect to thoſe among the ariſtocracy, who have a *property in ſome of the abuſes* which are at preſent reprobated, and who are gratified with the preſent war, from a hope that it will ſtifle the voice of liberty and reform; if theſe perſonages, taking advantage of the good humour and affluence of the nation, ſhould commute their more objectionable privileges for ſolid returns, might they not afterwards fearleſsly *defy* all clamors reſpecting thoſe privileges, and all viciſſitudes of public opinion? And with reſpect to thoſe of them, who have a *poſitive* ſupport to offer to government, whether of influence or of talent, ſurely it never can be their intereſt (for we ſpeak of intereſt only) to render government uncontrolable: ſince, if it be true, that no ſubject can expect to obtain conſideration for the loan of his ſupport, where an unbridled government has become paramount over all;

it follows, as a conſequence, that *placemen* and *oppoſitioniſts* are correlative terms; and therefore that the extinction of the one, implies the extinction of the other.—As to diſintereſted perſons, if they approve of things as they *are;* and ſtill more, if they think that the crown has acquired too much power (from the late great augmentation of our dominions, of tax-gatherers, of luxury, and by means of internal managements,) it is highly incumbent upon *them* to make a ſtand; leſt, under the wing of the triumvirs, the crown ſhould hereafter abound too much in force, as well as in influence. Oppoſition are ſaid to ſuffer by often crying out *the wolf;* but the wolves will be found coming in upon us in packs, if the preſent ſavage ſyſtem of the triumvirs gains ground; and *as there is certainly a point exiſting*, when a conſtitution may become endangered, it is beſt to uſe exertion, leſt this danger, which is now ſo apparent, ſhould paſs the reach of remedy.—To prevent any diffidence, or indolence in our conduct upon this important occaſion, I ſhall only remark, that liberty is ſo ſlippery a poſſeſſion, that it has ſeldom laſted long, except in five ſituations; namely, where it has been aided by waters, by mountains, by inſignificance, by foreign jealouſies, or by education; that is, except where the country was ſuch as could be defended without *ſtanding* armies, or could not ſubſiſt unleſs under good government, or was not worth attacking, or found a defender, or had particular cultivation beſtowed upon the minds of its inhabitants. Now, whatever may be thought of the reſources of our own iſland, and of our own conſtitution, it was a ſaying of the late Frederic of Pruſſia, that a reſpectable ſtanding army, and twenty executioners, would ſoon make us a very docile people.—The *monied intereſt*, however, may be injured by a much ſlighter operation, than a *change*

of government; for they may thoroughly depend, that if in conſequence of war, the nation becomes over-charged with taxes, the ſimple honeſty of Louis XVI. will not be copied; but a rough retrenchment will be made in the intereſt due to the public creditor; as the clamors of the monied man will in future be thought of much leſs moment by Princes, than the convulſions of the people and the riſk of a revolution.—And if I am right in all theſe arguments, nothing remains but to ſuggeſt, that as the preſent war was partly made in conformity to the public voice, each individual has only to ſtate in all the ſocieties which he frequents, that "the war "has gone far enough," in order to encourage Miniſters to make a peace.

Another reaſon for immediate negotiation, which is alſo of an internal nature, is to be found in the ſtate of our *financial and trading ſyſtems*.—Credit, like other things, has its particular diſeaſe; namely, a tendency to a too great extenſion; and this diſeaſe returns, whenever a new race of people ſucceed, who are not to be made wiſe by the experience of their predeceſſors; conſequently, the diſeaſe is to a certain degree, periodical. But the exceſs of private credit between man and man, has lately been joined by the exceſs belonging to another and *new* ſpecies of credit; namely, that which has been lately given to the paper of *country banks*, which has ſo much vitiated our *national circulating medium*. The war has accelerated the derangement of both of theſe fabrics of credit, and it has at the ſame time rendered difficult the remedies to be applied to our ſituation; eſpecially as a general war, with the ſcarcity of neutral carriers, and the ſhattered ſtate of credit (both public and private) in various places upon the Continent

Continent which are included in our commercial circles, has greatly injured trade. While this double bladder of trading and banking credit, above deſcribed, remained full-blown, it kept us triumphantly buoyant, and increaſed the produce of our taxes, and encouraged the enterpriſes of every deſcription of people; but ſince it has collapſed and become flaccid, we have had conſiderable ſtruggles to bear ourſelves up; and no complete change can ſuddenly occur at preſent, but by means of a peace; which, beſides reſtoring confidence, ſhall encourage and facilitate the general production, the exchanges, and the conſumption of commodities.

There is another reaſon, which, in my opinion, equally relates to the high and the low, to the government and to the people, and which ſtrongly pleads for peace: I mean, the rapid rate at which we are *ſpoiling our tempers*.—We have ſeen many perſons among us, of all ranks, profoundly ignorant of the ſtate of things in France, who yet have learned to utter imprecations the moſt horrid againſt a whole nation. One is apt to ſuſpect at times, that we are among the pupils of Caligula and Nero, when we obſerve men and even women, who ſeem deſirous that the French nation ſhould have but one neck, that themſelves might ſerve as the executioners, and find ſome who would fiddle while Paris was burning. Such ſentiments would certainly diſgrace the reprobated country of France itſelf, whoſe miſdeeds are made the pretended parent of them.—I muſt here add, that to deny corn to the *armies* and *garriſons* of France might ſeem juſtifiable, though at the expence of dangerous meaſures towards neutral powers; but to deny corn to the people of France, and (like Lord Auckland) *knowingly* to favour either the creation or

the operation of "*famine*," throughout a *whole nation*, ſeems a ſtrange relapſe into ſyſtems, from which the philanthrophy of modern writers of all nations, and the ſoftening principles of the age, had once ſeemed to have delivered us; eſpecially, as the operation of famine upon the temper of a nation, is ſeldom regular and ſyſtematic, but commonly tumultuous and uncertain; being much more likely to produce, in the preſent inſtance, the maſſacre of men of ſubſtance in each little community of France, than the converſion or excluſion of the preſent general governors of it.—But another evil to reſult from the ſpirit which has lately gone forth among us, is the inveteracy endeavoured to be eſtabliſhed againſt the French nation, which tending to generate ſimilar paſſions on their ſide, a ſecond road may thence be opened for a return to all our mutual ancient animoſity and infanity; and thus future miniſters and ages may long have to rue the effects of a conduct, which will have again alienated from each other two great nations; who, as living ſo near each other, are highly intereſted in mutual peace, the eſtabliſhment of which between them would probably lead to the peace of Europe and mankind.

Let me urge, as the laſt poſitive motive for peace, that the periods moſt opportune for negotiation, are thoſe of *victory*. As to war, we may juſt as wiſely count upon the ſtability of the appearances of the ſky in our changeable climate, as upon the prognoſtications of war, where the battle is not to the ſtrong, any more than the race is to the ſwift. A random ſhot may remove temper and ability on one ſide, and the wheel of fortune may turn up ſome eminent new character on the other; and none can deny the capability of France

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for reſiſtance if combined under proper leaders.—Let us then remember the rule of the late King of Pruſſia in his own wars, which was, never to loſe ſight of original principles, and of the moderation dictated by good ſenſe, whatever proſperity may occur at particular moments.—This rule is the more important, at the preſent inſtant; firſt, becauſe France will probably be much leſs tractable, if ſhe ſhall have ſeen us do our worſt, and find it ineffectual; and ſecondly, becauſe an alliance of a nature ſo hererogeneous, as that which acts againſt France at preſent, is ſeldom durable.

I ſhall here end my ſtatement of the *poſitive reaſons*, for negotiating with France, which it will be ſeen might eaſily be both extended and enforced, which have been (I truſt) accompanied with ſufficient temper and candour, and of which the laſt alone admits any doubt as to the ſucceſsful iſſue of the war.—I ſhall be indulged in a few words by way of *concluſion*, and chiefly of a *negative*, and if poſſible of a perſuaſive tendency.

Let us not then ſeek for excuſes, to avoid terminating ſo ſhocking an evil as war; or ſhew, by our being inſenſible of the value of peace, our ignorance of the means of improving the bleſſing.—If the preſent French Government is by its very nature *fugitive*, let it paſs away of itſelf, and let us not reſiſt the drunkard in his fury?—If the French have combination enough to conduct a war, they have ſufficient combination to conclude a peace, and it is then in vain to ſay, that *there is no one to treat with*.—Shall we complain that they are *faithleſs*, and at the ſame time make treaties of commerce or of alliance with Ruſſia and Pruſſia, who

who have ſhewn ſuch utter want of recollection of *their* engagements towards Poland? Were not the Kings of France, whom we wiſh to reinſtate, equally inclined to want of ſincerity, with their democratic ſucceſſors; and was it not under their government, that we firſt learned the reproach on *Gallic faith;* and are not the preſent leaders in France educated in the ſame ſchool?—Is it not the *intereſt* of all France to terminate a conſuming war, and eſpecially ſo, that of the *civil* leaders of France to profit by a peace; and is not their *intereſt* in theſe reſpects, as much likely to make the oath of France ſacred, as if "Styx were bound nine times "round her?" And if this is not deemed enough, let us call in all Europe to the guarantee, and uſe the double tie of her *own* intereſt, and that of *Europe*, to make a wall of braſs to encompaſs her.

Do not let us, under the pretext of *benefiting* the French, deprive them of the right of governing themſelves after their own manner, and even of trying whatever experiments they may think proper? If their proceedings ſhall become laudable, the *public* of the Britiſh empire can have no reaſon to be uneaſy; and if otherwiſe, and if they exhibit, as of late, a neſt of hiſſing ſnakes and furies, rather than of men combining for the public good; will it not ſerve like another Meduſa's ſhield, to petrify our hearts againſt them; and make us duly eſteem better governments, from the contemplation of the effects of bad ones?—And ſhall an affected ſenſe of *religion* ſeduce us, when the Deity by his own means, can protect his own cauſe; and when among all the violences of the French, we are at leaſt ſure, that *proteſtantiſm* will find harbour, if not new converts among them?—If it is compaſſion that moves our modern dukes of Alva, then let us

remember

remember the remark (which is as true, as it is admirable,) that *the reign of anarchy is always ſhort, and the reign of deſpotiſm is commonly long;* and not endeavour to cure a ſhort diſeaſe by a deſtructive remedy. Let us rather take pains to reconcile, and point out order to the French; than perſiſt in dividing and debauching them, in order to blame and profit by the diſorders, crimes and follies of our *own* ſecret inſtigation.

Is not the royal principle of *interference* in foreign governments, as eaſily capable of being perverted to bad pupoſes, as the popular principle of *fraternity*; and therefore equally, and for ſimilar reaſons, to be reprobated? If the triumvirs interfere in the government of France, can it be for any other motive but to bend it to their *own* purpoſes; which muſt make the ſyſtem produced at once *unnatural for France*, and dangerous to *us?* Why ſhould we place the keys of Europe in the hands of the triumvirs, when we ſee the evil which has ariſen from placing the keys of St. Peter in the hands of his pretended deſcendants; for "who will keep the "keepers?"—What were the crimes of Poland and of France, which excited the notice of the triumvirs, except that they ſeemed to be weak, and dared to be free; in ſhort, that they offered plunder on one ſide, and gave examples which might excite alarm on the other? Are not we alſo *free;* and ſhall we voluntarily make ourſelves alſo *weak*, with theſe inſtances before us?—Do we not ſee that the triumvirs are already wholly out of *our* reach; but that their ſwelling conqueſts will ſoon place us within *theirs?* And that in this caſe, firſt the liberties of the nation will go, then of the ariſtocracy, and laſtly of the King (whoever he ſhould be) who ſhall have betrayed them? If, in the

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mean time, we wiſh to know the power of theſe triumvirs, in a ſingle word, let us aſk on whoſe *conſent* they depend, and who can *control* them; that is, for example, ſince their *account is ſtill kept open* with Poland, who is to ſettle that account; and will it ever be brought to a cloſe, otherwiſe than by the annihilation of Poland? And has England any *real* influence to expect in Europe, after ſhe ſhall in effect have bound Poland and France to the car of the triumvirs: and, amidſt all the duſt and aſhes that will afterwards be raiſed, will ſhe be any thing better, even in her moſt triumphant attitude, than the fly upon the chariot wheel?

As I have not in general, ſuppoſed in my late diſcuſſions, that the war with France will be otherwiſe than victorious, I muſt not be accuſed of founding myſelf upon falſe notions of the French *ſuperiority*. For the purpoſe of argument, I have in general, taken *every* thing for granted, that the friends of the war can wiſh; and have only looked *one ſtep beyond* this ſuppoſed torrent of ſucceſs, and aſked, what is thenceforwards to ſupply the chaſm of France in the politics of Europe at large; and ſtill more, what is to counterbalance its incorporation into the ſchemes of the triumvirate? It is *then* that we ſhall find, that *nec tecum nec ſine te*, that *neither with her nor without her*, is a doctrine, which ought earlier to have been conſidered; that there are many partial evils, which are neceſſary to produce a more general good; and that the permanent oppoſition of France to the triumvirs, is in no ſhape more certain, than under that of a *Republic*.—And what is there alarming in a *domeſtic* view, in having a Republic in France, if it is of a nature to alienate our own people from it, and to make all their proceedings ſeem inapplicable to our monarchical ſyſtem? And taking it in a *foreign* view, if the French diſlike

Kings,

Kings, will not that antipathy deprive them of the reſource of *family* alliances; and if at the ſame time they reject royal ariſtocratical alliances in every *other* ſhape, or if their conduct and their views render other ſtates diſinclined to ally with *them*, and diſpoſed without *compact or burthen* to co-operate with *us*; is this an evil, which we, who affect to think the French dangerous as *rivals*, ought to ſeek to remedy?

A ſtateſman, like the god of the Stoicks, ſhould be formed of *intellect without paſſion*. May he then, who now guides our helm, render himſelf ſuperior, not ſo much to his *own* paſſions, as to thoſe of *others*: and, in ſhaping his conduct, upon this greateſt of all queſtions which Providence perhaps ever intruſted to the deciſion of man, let him remember what a falſe ſtep may coſt to the world and to himſelf! However adroitly he may think to ſteer the veſſel, which like another ark, ſuſtains the whole of human kind; let him at leaſt remember, that the ableſt of men may *die*, even if he ſhould not be firſt *diſplaced*; and that if he leaves his complicated work unfiniſhed, others may take it up, and conclude it in other modes, and upon other principles, than his own; and may thus bring upon us an eternity of evils, which every individual whatever, who is hereafter to be born, will naturally place to *his* account, as the *original author*.

A CALM OBSERVER.

Miſcellaneous Extracts from a Letter publiſhed the 3d of September 1792.

THE importance of a *barrier* againſt the deſigns of a coalition of ambitious European Powers, has been formerly inſiſted upon.—I ſhall only add, that while France preſerves her *preſent ſize*, ſhe will eaſily prevent wars, or impoſe peace among ſuch powers; and ſhe will then alſo more eaſily *incline* to do it; not only becauſe it will then be leſs of an effort to her, but becauſe it will be oftener for her intereſt; for whatever are the intereſts of any *one* part of her dominions, ſhe will then in turn cauſe to be ſupported by *all* the other parts of them.—Whereas divide France, and then, inſtead of the *whole* of it being diſpoſed to watch the balance of Europe, partial feelings will ariſe, and only a fragment of it will perhaps adopt what might otherwiſe have been adopted by the whole; nay, the fragments may be contending with each other, or become a prey to other potentates, or involve *us* in their quarrels, or attend to their own affairs, inſtead of aſſiſting in preſerving the general tranquillity of Europe.

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Peace is evidently for the advantage of nations which are great proprietors, and perhaps not under juſt titles; and while pacific principles render harmleſs the greateſt empires (as is inſtanced in the caſe of China), ſo peace at *preſent* is peculiarly ſuited to the intereſt of Great-Britain and Pruſſia; for if we deſign to pay *our* debts on our ſide, and if Pruſſia wiſhes to benefit by the circumſtance of its having none to pay on *its* ſide; it is of great moment to ſtop a war, which will certainly liberate both France and Auſtria from the oppreſſive burthen

burthen of *their* debts, and render them as it were, renovated powers.

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But even ſhould ſucceſs in a war with France be certain, *ſucceſs* itſelf may be dangerous. An overflow of proſperity even in private life, is often more than can be borne;—but it is ſtill more true of ſtates, becauſe in ſtates, there is a *ſeparation of intereſts* kept up between the governors and governed. Independent of the inſolence, wanton projects, and conſequent envy, attending an overgrown (and in our caſe an artificial) power, it is to be obſerved, that the *whole* of the *imperial* or general government of the Britiſh empire depends upon the *Britiſh Parliament*, which is notoriouſly liable to corruption. The more therefore our *foreign dominions* ſhall increaſe, the more will they furniſh wealth and patronage to increaſe ſuch corruption; eſpecially as the foreign dominions alluded to, furniſh (as has been admirably obſerved) no means of *abſorption for this freſh acquired influence* in any *local* ſtruggle with the governed, but leave it undiminiſhed to be transferred to act on the ſide of the Crown *at home*.—The moſt preciſe courtiers and favourers of ariſtocracy muſt allow, that from the nature of human affairs, decline follows all power left without a counterpoiſe (for, upon the caſe aſſumed, we ſhould find no counterpoiſe at *ſea*), and every lover of his country muſt acknowledge, that there is ſuch a thing poſſible, firſt as uncontrolled power, and then as deſpotiſm; and that nothing can be more likely to introduce theſe, than ſucceſsfully to run down popular principles on the one hand, and boundleſsly to increaſe the corrupting powers of the Crown on the other.—It is wiſeſt therefore that we ſhould remain as we are, as to foreign dominions, if we do not even reduce our preſent proportion of them.

LETTER

LETTER X.

Publiſhed May 16, 1793.

SIR,

NOTWITHSTANDING a royal ſage has determined that *nothing is new* under the ſun*, the democratic government of France is ſaid to have invented a new ſyſtem of foreign politics, under the names of *proſelytiſm and fraternization*. My preſent letter, however, purſuant to a former promiſe, will ſhew, that an internal interference with foreign ſtates, and the annexation of dominion to dominion for purpoſes of aggrandizement, are among the moſt inveterate and predominant principles of long eſtabliſhed governments. Theſe principles therefore only appear novel and odious in France, becauſe novel and deſpiſed perſons have there *openly* adopted them; and by thus placing them in a new light and poſition, have ſerved as it were, to *unfamiliarize* them to our minds.—If we prove, therefore, that the very ſame allies who pretend to correct the French, on account of their late proceedings in foreign politics, are in every ſhape equally guilty with themſelves; it will follow, that when France meretriciouſly opens her arms to embrace foreign nations, none of her accuſers are intitled by their own innocence, to caſt the firſt ſtone at the offending adultreſs.—As it ſometimes happens, that the interference of the old governments with foreign ſtates has been conducted by more than one potentate at a time, the co-operation of theſe potentates will enable us to furniſh proofs of a *complete ſyſtem of confraternity* in all its parts; and thus to exhibit ſtill more extenſive means for producing effect on their ſide, than thoſe employed by France.

* That is, in its principles.

It may be thought improper by ſome to cite here the *family compact* of the Bourbons, formed in 1763; notwithſtanding its ſtipulations were of ſuch a nature, that merely for one party to *demand* aid in any war, without any aſſigned motive, formed of itſelf an obligation upon the other to afford it; and in like manner in the conditions of the ſucceeding peace, as well as in the operations of the war itſelf, both the parties were to be conſidered, and were to act, as if they formed but "*one and the ſame power;*" the *advantages* received by one of them at the peace, being held to preclude all conſideration reſpecting the *loſſes* of the other.—But if the family compact be ſaid, to have been only defenſive by its intentions, and to have ſometimes fallen ſhort even of being defenſive in practice, it will at leaſt ſerve as a proof, that many things which are formidable in their outſet, often diſſipate themſelves with time; and therefore that the decree of fraternization of the Convention (even if it were not repealed) might from its nature become ſtill more of a *brutum fulmen*, and leſs effective even than the family compact.—If ſchemes of this deſcription, however, moulder away when they are attended with difficulties; yet the caſe very widely differs, when *ſucceſs is eaſy*, and ſtill more when one ſucceſs promotes another; which is the preciſe caſe in the preſent conſpiracy of Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia, againſt the rights *of men and of Princes*.—It is alſo farther to be noticed, that if the Bourbon family, enlarged as it now is, by blood and by marriage, were again to be combined under one general compact, it would include France, Spain, Portugal, Sardinia, Naples, and Parma, as well as the German, Hungarian, Turkiſh, Belgic, and Italian dominions of the Houſe of Auſtria; and the members of this vaſt concatenation of powers, ſtung

with the ſenſe of paſt misfortunes, and tempted by the proſpect of immediate acquiſitions, might then exhibit a league far more potent, more active, and more indiſſoluble, than any family or other league which has yet occurred in hiſtory. And if this maſs of co-operating potentates ſhould then enter into a ſtill farther concert with Ruſſia and with Pruſſia, the fall of Denmark and of Sweden, with all the petty fragments of Europe, would be inſtantaneous; and nothing would be left of all the *whole* of Europe to *act* againſt that whole, but Great-Britain.—How long in ſuch caſe, the Britiſh Empire, and ſtill more the Britiſh Conſtitution, would be ſpared; and if ſpared, by what deluges of blood, and by what expenditure of treaſure, it muſt be effected, I leave to every honeſt man to determine.

But if the *family compact* ſhould be excluded from diſcuſſion here, the late royal compact ſtyled the *concert of princes* muſt be admitted to be ſtrictly within our limits; for it originated with the proceedings of France, and has ſince been referred by its authors to thoſe proceedings as one of its chief objects; and indeed a *concerted* operation of ſovereigns which in any ſhape reſpects *domeſtic* tranſactions, muſt neceſſarily imply that ſome of thoſe ſovereigns are bound to intermeddle in given caſes, in the interior of *other* countries. If we are to believe the Emperor of Germany and the brothers of Louis XVI. this concert was not only open to the acceſſion of different princes, but was actually acceded to by a number of them.—But if this be true, in what does it eſſentially differ from the plan of fraternization or interference exhibited by the French, except in having been prior to it, and cauſing the French ſyſtem to be adopted for the purpoſe of countervailing it.—But let us now proceed

from

from avowed treaties, to thoſe *overt-acts* which are themſelves as powerful evidence of the ſecret deſigns of princes, as acknowledged treaties of co-operation.

The caſe of *Poland* has, ſome time ſince, furniſhed a notable and undeniable inſtance of confraternity in all its varieties and complications. After Ruſſia had long endeavoured to fraternize with the Poliſh diffidents, (in oppoſition to the very party which ſhe has ſince ſupported,) Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia, in 1772, coaleſced in brotherly-love with one another, in order to cut off three vaſt portions of Poland; and then upon the ſyſtem of proſelytiſm and fraternization, annexed theſe portions, with equally brotherly-love, to their own dominions; leaving the reſt of Poland, inſtantly after they had all *guaranteed* its independence, to be governed by the miniſter of one of the plunderers (according to the gay confeſſion of another of theſe plunderers,) as a Roman province uſed to be governed by its pro-conſul.

By another act of confraternity between the Republic of Berne and the Monarchs of France and Sardinia, the Republic of *Geneva* was new modelled.

A like act of confraternity between the Monarch of France and the Republic of *Geneva*, enabled the former to buy and the latter to ſell *Corſica;* which the French Conſtituent Aſſembly afterwards honourably made an integrant part of France, inſtead of retaining it as its appendage.

A ſyſtem of confraternity between certain powers in Europe, (firſt inſtigated by the *monarchy* of France) contributed to divide thirteen governments in *North America* from England, and to erect a new Swiſs democratic confederacy in the Weſtern world.

A jumble of heterogenous fraternity between the limited King of England and the Dutch Stadtholder

on the one ſide, and the arbitrary Monarch of France and the Dutch popular party on the other ſide, has twice nearly torn *Holland* into pieces; till Pruſſia at laſt mixed in the proceedings, and gave a forced and temporary unity in favour of the Stadtholder; and thereby furniſhed a precedent, as far as precedent can juſtify it, for the irruption of a brotherly ſwarm of French under Dumourier.

Sweden has been a prey to fraternity in various ſenſes; for firſt the Monarchy of France fraternized with its late King, to enable him to effect a Revolution in favour of arbitrary power; and then Ruſſia leagued with the Swediſh *Nobles* againſt this King, juſt as ſhe is now fomenting an oppoſition of the *popular party* to the Regent. The late King alſo ſold his brotherly friendſhip both to France and againſt France, to Turkey and againſt Turkey, and firſt oppoſed and then co-operated with Ruſſia; till at laſt, death arreſted him in his project of heading the grand brotherhood of Princes againſt France, his great benefactor and paymaſter.

I will not enlarge reſpecting *Denmark*, where Ruſſian fraternity has long over-ruled the court and the nation; nor on the fraternal revolt excited by Pruſſia in the *Auſtrian Low Countries;* nor on our own deſign of exciting a ſimilar revolt in *Spaniſh America*, had the late rupture with Spain ended in a confirmed war.—But caſting our eyes to *infidel* nations (and without noticing any meaſures with the Barbary powers,) let us recall to mind the zeal of Ruſſia and Auſtria to make brothers and proſelytes of the *Turks*, by open force; together with the intrigues of the Ruſſians at the Porte, in Egypt, in Perſia, upon the borders of Perſia, and among various Tartar nations and Tribes.—Still more in point are our own proceedings in *India;* where fraternal ſentiments,

propagated by the ſword or by bribery, have ſerved in a few years to give us twenty millions of new relations at the diſtance of ten thouſand miles from home.—But the *triumvirate* which we lately formed in *India* with the Mahrattas and the Nizam, againſt Tippoo Saib, is peculiarly inſtructive; for no impartial judge of Indian politics can fail to ſee, that Tippoo was to the *country powers of India*, what France is to Europe, when menaced by the triumvirate of Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia. Extinguiſh Tippoo or extinguiſh France, and in either caſe, a turbulent power indeed may fall; but with it will fall the bulwark, which not only virtually defends its weak and neutral neighbours, but even the weaker triumvirs themſelves, from the prepollent members of the reſpective triumvirates; and whatever it is that we may be ſuppoſed likely to gain by this operation in India, yet the apparent *certainty* of that gain ought at leaſt to alarm us for the ſimilar conſequences liable to happen at preſent in *Europe*, where the ſyſtem will prove in oppoſition to our intereſts.

This catalogue of exploits which have taken place towards foreign powers under old eſtabliſhed governments, in which the parties have ſometimes acted conjunctively and ſometimes ſeparately, commonly for their own intereſt, but occaſionally from pure impartial love for the propagation of arbitrary power; may ſerve to counterbalance the conduct of France, whether ſuppoſed to be directed to ſelfiſh ambition, or to internal interference upon the theoretical principles.—It therefore clearly ſhews, that the preſent objections towards France, are to perſons, rather than to things; and to the profanation of the ſyſtem by impure hands, rather than to the ſyſtem itſelf; ſo as to excuſe an alluſion to our vulgar ſaying, on account of its appoſiteneſs, namely, that it is ſafer for

one party to ſteal a horſe, than for another to look over an hedge.

But let it not be thought, becauſe our evidence is already thus ſatisfactory, that we have here terminated our recital of the contradictions of the powers, combined againſt France under pretence of *oppoſing* her late ſyſtem of proſelytiſm and fraternization; for the two moſt flagrant inſtances yet remain for obſervation.

The firſt of theſe is to be found in the act of confederation againſt France itſelf, where the very correctors of the French ſyſtem evidently combat their own rules; becauſe it is too clear, that beneficence has no ſhare in their meaſures againſt France. Love of plunder, jealouſy of the people, and the *eſprit du corps* among Princes; theſe are its ruling motives; for even the Britiſh Miniſter, Lord Auckland, in a late public procedure affirms, that the French revolution was deteſtable *ab ovo*, and in its *earlieſt* infancy; (though there was a time, when all Europe might have reſpected it without impeachment, becauſe it was of a *negative* nature, and merely ſubverſive of arbitrary power). Indeed the only fair object in France, perſonally intereſting to its invaders, was the King and his immediate family; and even this motive was but ſubordinate. To ſuppreſs liberty, and to puniſh preſumptuous upſtarts; to form by *means* of France, a *general fund for plunder*; and to incapacitate from future reſiſtance any reſidue which might be left to France, or at leaſt to reſtore its league with Auſtria; theſe were the motives of Auſtria, the leading confederate.—The ſlights manifeſted on all ſides to the brothers of the King of France, and the contempt ſhewn for men of the beſt blood and character among the French ariſtocracy (who are now ſcarcely allowed the humble permiſſion of *fighting in their own cauſe*), may here

here ſerve to convince thoſe perſons whoſe ſenſibility is reſerved only for conſiderations of pride.—But to thoſe who look alſo to what reſpects *good faith*, I may cite firſt, the early diſavowal by the Emperor of all ſchemes of conqueſt, which was followed three weeks afterwards by his hint to the German Empire to *diſſolve the treaty of Weſtphalia*, and conſequently the ceſſions flowing from it; and next, the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg's late ſelf-denying declaration, equally retracted within the three following days. When the Duke of Brunſwick promiſed not to intermeddle in the internal affairs of France, this military Meſſiah announced in the ſame breath, that he nevertheleſs came to place *all* their concerns at the abſolute diſcretion of their King: that is, he would not himſelf manacle the *hands*, nor fetter the *feet* of the culprit againſt whom he marched, but would only throw his *whole perſon* into durance, that every member of it might there be bound *by others* at pleaſure.—The falſe behaviour of the late Emperor, and the ſupple conduct of the preſent, to the Brabanters, who had juſtly been irritated by the Emperor Joſeph, too plainly confirm, that the promiſes of Princes to *ſubjects* are ſeldom ſacred, except *when they want the power to evade them.* And the ſame concluſion may be drawn with reſpect to their engagements with *foreign powers*, from the recent conduct of the triumvirate of Ruſſia, Pruſſia, and Auſtria, in the *ſecond partition of Poland*—which is the *laſt inſtance* to which we ſhall refer for our preſent purpoſe.

When the ſovereigns of Auſtria and Pruſſia met at Pilnitz to vow the ſacrifice of their mutual reſentments, every wiſe man perceived, that the deſign was not to abandon their ambitious views, but merely to vary their object; and that ſome conſiderable change would ſoon be attempted in Europe. The junction of Ruſſia

made their projects, whatever was the nature of them, ſtill more feaſible than ever. On the ſide of *France* indeed the attempt has been attended with conſiderable ſtruggle;—but *Poland* had nothing to oppoſe to theſe triumvirs, beſides the feeble tie of their *own* engagements towards her. The crime of having wiſhed to ſecure her independence by a free conſtitution, though encouraged and ſanctioned by Pruſſia, was puniſhable even in the eyes of Pruſſia, as ſoon as Pruſſia was intereſted in rendering her a weak enemy, rather than an efficient ally; and the contagious example of freedom which ſhe was exhibiting, was therefore to be exterminated by a new partition. In the courſe of this ſecond partition of Poland, Ruſſia has taken for her ſhare nearly three millions and an half of people, included in a line from Dryſſa (between Dunaburg and Polock on the Duna) in the North, to Kaminiec in the South (oppoſite to Chockzim upon the Dnieſter;) forming the *whole of the Eaſtern ſide* of Poland. Pruſſia, for her proportion, has had aſſigned to her a waving line to the *Weſtward*, which paſſing cloſe on the Weſt of Warſaw, joins Sileſia to her dominions on the Baltic; comprehending Great Poland, and nearly one million and an half of people. This, with the former depredation of the triumvirate, conſtitutes nearly two thirds of Poland, as it ſtood in 1772; leaving the ſhare of Auſtria upon the preſent occaſion *ſtill to be accounted for* out of the other third.—In the mean time, the reſiduary exiſtence of Poland, *as Poland*, ſtill remains problematical; eſpecially as the enemy continues to overſpread the undivided remnant.—As to pretexts for acts ſo unjuſtifiable in themſelves, ſo unprecedented in hiſtory, ſo contrary to treaty, and perpetrated in the midſt of the *moſt profound peace*, there can be none. In the manifeſtos

feſtos of Ruſſia and Pruſſia which are before the public, the parties ſpeak for themſelves, much as the wolf in the fable talks to the lamb. Inſult, miſrepreſentation, and injuſtice, run through the whole; and the only difference is, that of the two, the Pruſſian manifeſto which ought to have obſerved the moſt delicacies, has obſerved the leaſt.

The caſe of Poland is the more flagrant, as the triumvirs have there acted the parts of "*falſe* brothers" both to its unhappy monarch, and to the Elector of Saxony; each of whom they have in ſucceſſion robbed of a throne. The Elector of Bavaria and the Duke of Deux-Ponts would have had ſimilar complaints to prefer againſt the late Emperor Joſeph, had not Pruſſia and Hanover interfered, and ſet on foot the German league againſt Auſtria, ſince virtually annulled.—If we ſhould ourſelves now be found countenancing any projects reſpecting Bavaria, hoſtile to its preſent or future ſovereign, or to the balance of Europe, it will then appear that our pretexts urged reſpecting the preſent war with France are falſe; and that we are ourſelves engaged in a *war of ambition;* to which the ſecurity of Europe, and the rights not only of nations, but of *ſovereigns* are to be ſacrificed. But let us rather hope, that our miniſters are engaged in a miſtaken, than in a profligate purſuit; and that they are ſtill widely remote from being implicated in the crimes and hypocriſy of the triumvirs.

To conclude—The various tranſactions referred to in this letter (of which the recital, however neceſſary, may perhaps appear barren to the reader) at leaſt ſufficiently prove that the French ſyſtem with regard to foreign nations is not *rara avis in terris*, but is only an old

ſyſtem

ſyſtem under new names.—A few miſcellaneous remarks of a more intereſting nature remain to be urged reſpecting thoſe tranſactions, which will immediately be preſented in another letter.

May 13, 1793.

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTER XI.

Publiſhed May 21 *and* 23, 1793.

SIR,

I Have engaged to offer ſome miſcellaneous remarks ſuggeſted by the *foreign* proceedings of the chief of thoſe old eſtabliſhed governments, which are now confederated againſt France; and this I ſhall do under ſeveral diſtinct heads.

1. I muſt obſerve generally, on the ſubject of *the interference of one ſtate in the internal concerns of another*, that one ſtate can never feel for another, as it does for itſelf; and therefore, having its *own* intereſt for its principal guide, it will frequently ſeek to injure its neighbours, under pretence of ſerving them. Beſides, foreigners rarely underſtand either the ſentiments or the intereſts of other countries. Arbitrary princes, likewiſe, never make the ſubjects of their own dominions ſo happy, as to encourage their being intruſted with the management of other nations. Laſtly, ſince moſt governments are arbitrary, we may judge *a priori*, that the uſual leaning of theſe governments, in critical times,

times, will be to render arbitrary principles more and more prevailing.—But as theſe may be thought negative conſiderations with reſpect to the ſubject before us, I ſhall urge affirmatively that every ſtate has a *right* to poſſeſs a conſtitution, which is either expreſsly or tacitly approved by a majority of ſuch perſons *within* itſelf, as are capable of giving a juſt and diſintereſted judgment in public affairs, or at leaſt, of ſelecting perſons proper to perform this office for them: though I confeſs, at the ſame time, that prudence often, and indeed commonly, renders it neceſſary to wave the active exerciſe of this right.—If governments, however, are held to depend upon any other baſis, than one which is *internal*, what muſt be the conduct of a people remote from all neighbours; or of a people placed among various neighbours with conflicting opinions? And if the baſis of government be thus proved to be internal, it muſt either reſt upon blind *chance*, or upon *arbitrary will*, for its origin, ſupport, and improvement; or elſe we muſt allow, as before, that it ultimately reſides in a *majority* of perſons of ſome deſcription or other within a ſtate, who yet (I repeat) will generally do moſt good, when they conduct themſelves with moſt reſerve.—This theory, or *rationale*, upon the ſubject of the interpoſition of one ſtate in the domeſtic concerns of another, may be held liable to the following objections, eſpecially as applied to the combination againſt France.

Firſt, it may be ſaid, that the *being at war* with another ſtate, furniſhes a legitimate motive for interfering in its domeſtic government.—But admitting this aſſertion to be true, where the cauſe of the war is juſt and important, and where ſuch interference is indiſpenſable to the general ſafety of the party at war; yet it will ſtill be neceſſary to ſhew, in the preſent inſtance,

that

that the conſtitution, which is to be ſuppreſſed in France is more dangerous in a *foreign* view, than the conſtitution which is propoſed to be upheld; and that the change projected, will not only be practicable, but will be permanent, and anſwering to the coſt.—This ſubject I ſhall ſoon reſume, only remarking here, with reſpect to the confederates, that it would be more than reaſoning in a vicious circle, if a war *begun* by them upon a principle of *wanton* interference, and which may be terminated at pleaſure upon fair conditions, ſhould be held to be *that* ſort of war, which *of itſelf* warrants an interference in the domeſtic politics of the French.

But the *French*, it may be ſaid, *began* this war; and therefore deſerve *puniſhment* for it.—To this I reply, that this is a mere queſtion of chronology. In the commencement of the revolution, the deteſtation of the old wars cauſed by the monarchy, greatly contributed to the revolution; and the new government reſented no inſults whatever (among the many they received) from foreign powers, but uſed a temporiſing conduct, till the winter of 1791-2; when they firſt teſtified their diſſatisfaction at the alliance with Auſtria. It was chiefly the fear of loſing this alliance, in conſequence of the pacific ſentiments prevailing in France, joined to the relationſhip of the Queen, which led Auſtria to endeavour to change back the French government from a *national* to a *perſonal* form. I muſt farther add, that had not the refractory party in France (and the caſe was the ſame in Poland) been countenanced by foreign governments, every one concerned would ſoon probably have ſubmitted to the revolution. It is alſo likely, had the French revolution been allowed to proceed more quietly, that the democratic party in France never would

would have acquired their preſent ſway, nor have given room for foreign powers to encourage their exceſſes in order to render them odious and ridiculous.—And if this be ſo, then I ſay that *foreigners* are the great cauſe of what has happened wrong in France; and that till the French ſpirits were mounted by the proceedings of almoſt all foreign governments againſt them, they never took any meaſures againſt foreigners.—This then is the ſalient angle of the French proceedings in foreign affairs, and this the point of view which throws every thing into perſpective; ſo as to ſhew that the French in this reſpect, have been more ſinned againſt, than ſinning.

But benevolence, it may next be urged, requires this war to be purſued, in order to remove, by means of "*cautery and exciſion*, thoſe new principles, upon the "ſubject of which all Europe is at iſſue."—Why then will the framers of this objection forget here thoſe golden words, that *the reign of anarchy is commonly ſhort, and that of deſpotiſm commonly long?* Experience in all unfortunate concerns is a powerful remedy; for, as Sterne ſays, an ounce of a man's own ſenſe, is worth a ton of that of other people; and this is eminently true of the French, who are a peculiar nation, little underſtanding, and little underſtood by others, and who can alone ſucceed in convincing themſelves. At preſent, the French may ſay (and their poſterity after them), that their evils do not flow *from liberty*, but from thoſe perſons within and without France, who are the *enemies* or falſe friends of liberty: conſequently, even ſhould a new government be forced upon the French at the preſent inſtant, there will ſtill be a ſtanding motive left behind for their attempting another revolution; a motive, which will be inflamed by the natural

natural violence of their conquerors, and which will ſoon find ſome opportunity, for exerting itſelf, ſuch as dearth or foreign war. Opprobriouſly as we may think of the French proceedings, yet (as the ſcripture tells us,) the dog will return to his vomit; and to ſhew the eaſe of ſuch attempts in a large empire, I have no need of referring to Sicilian veſpers, but only to the extenſive revolt now raging along the Loire, notwithſtanding the preſent French government has at leaſt 400,000 men in its pay and the majority of the *nation* in its favour. If the only reſult therefore, of foreign interferences is to create a war to convulſe Europe, and then, after a ſhocking interval of foreign tyranny, to place the French in a ſituation in which they will have to renew the whole of their *revolutionary proceſs*, there ſeems to be little gained for humanity; eſpecially as this cruel expedient tends in other views to introduce new dangers of a *foreign* deſcription into the ſyſtem of Europe, and to produce every where *internal* evils far more incurable, than thoſe ariſing from the ravings of the Jacobins; the Jacobins, who are eaſily foiled every where by domeſtic remedies, were they not of themſelves (according to a happy expreſſion) "arrived "at that maturity of corruption, at which the worſt ex- "amples ceaſe to be contagious."—We now proceed to our ſecond general head.

2. Are the triumvirs in any view qualified to arrange the government of France or of any other foreign country? I anſwer *no*, on account of their horrid principles. Any power which ſays, *I am not content with my own dominions;* or which ſays, *having proſcribed liberty at home, I will perſecute it every where, leſt it ſhould ſteal in upon me unawares*, is an object of jealouſy, in proportion

portion to its means of miſchief; and theſe means ought certainly to alarm us, when the moſt formidable powers in Europe are combined in favour of ſuch a ſyſtem. To ſuch powers the ſuperintendance of our *internal* government is as little to be ſurrendered, as our *external* ſecurity.—For hear what theſe powers *declare!* It is this: "France muſt be governed by *one* man, and "if he is aided by counſellors, it muſt depend upon his "conſenting to ſuch; and Poland, in the mean time, "muſt be made over to us, ſince if we allow her to re-"tain a free conſtitution, it will ſeduce our own ſub-"jects."—Next, ſee what it is that theſe powers *execute*. They actually divide Poland; and they ſeek to divide France, becauſe it anſwers the double purpoſe of plunder and of quenching liberty. Would they not then for the ſame double reaſon divide the Britiſh empire?

3. The concert of princes, (as exemplified by the confederacy againſt France), avowedly eſtabliſhes a ſyſtem of mutual intercourſe between princes, in order to keep in awe their reſpective people; and thus to *propagate* and make *proſelytes* to arbitrary government by force. But avoiding popular topics, and ſeeking chiefly to ſuggeſt hints to thoſe, who have weight in public affairs, I ſhall aſk, under this head, if the triumvirs ſhould acquire a *carte blanche* over Europe, What is to become of our *ariſtocracy* here?—Suppoſe for inſtance any thing like the ſyſtem of Ruſſia to prevail? Has any one ever heard of a burgage-tenure borough in Ruſſia, returning legiſlators to a ſenate; and would our rotten boroughs either continue, or if extinguiſhed be compenſated for in the manner propoſed by Mr. Pitt, if a government by *one* perſon were introduced here by

foreign

foreign means?—Where are the nobility of Ruſſia? Are they not baniſhed to Moſcow by diſcontent, or to Siberia by deſpotiſm; and replaced by upſtarts at court, and by the favourites of theſe favourites. Is there a popular miniſter, a popular party, a public, or any room for generous ambition to be expected, under a ſyſtem where fame never brings any man forward to the public eye, unleſs by his misfortunes, or unleſs he is an active inſtrument of the power of the deſpot?—What are the clergy in theſe countries, but men paid to hoodwink and to tame their flocks; for which thoſe are moſt qualified, who are moſt abject and ignorant; and on whom therefore wealth and luxury would be more than waſted; for *ut populus, ſic ſacerdos?*—As to their army, it is a band of ſlaves to control ſlaves; one part of it being awed by another part; and while its officers are devoid of the generous *incentive*, of hoping that when they ſpill their blood, it is commonly to ſecure ſome public advantage; ſo the few of them who feel, have the melancholy ſentiment, that every drop ſhed by themſelves or by thoſe they vanquiſh, goes to cement the miſery of mankind both at home and abroad?—What are the traders and artiſts in theſe countries, but foreigners, the pupils of foreigners, or elſe mere nullities?—Can there be a monied intereſt, where there is no juſtice; can there be a permanent corporate body under a capricious government; or can any one thing regularly proſper in a country, where the moving ſpring is the *paſſion* of an individual, of whom the policy is to weaken every thing which can rival him, or diſcompoſe his faſtidious eaſe?—Such then is the change which muſt naturally ſooner or later follow, from encouraging the concert of princes and enabling them to play into one another's hands, for the purpoſe

purpoſe of extinguiſhing liberty; for to make ſovereigns deſpotic, and ſtill more to make *many* of them ſo together, is to give them into the keeping of their paſſions; and as paſſions which are indulged every day, become viler and viler, the deſpotiſm of Europe would ſoon reſemble that of Aſia, and at laſt copy the rankneſs of that of Africa itſelf, of which we ſo juſtly complain.—Surely then the fable of the *hen with the golden eggs*, is loſt upon our ariſtocracy, when they encourage any undertakings, which threaten the *fee ſimple* of their privileges, and when they give their *preſent* ſupport, ſo as to hazard the command of their own ſervices in future.—And let it not be thought that I charge the picture too high, when I thus talk of what would happen under a ſyſtem of legiſlation correſponding to that of Ruſſia; for that of the Auſtrians and Pruſſians would give no better quarter. Let us remember, for example, that though the *exterminating* part of the Duke of Brunſwick's memorial, was explained away by ſome; yet the great *motive or object* of the manifeſto, namely, to make the *ſole* power of France depend upon the will of one man, was done away by *none*; though on the contrary, the Prince of Saxe-Cobourg's declaration for a *conſtitutional* king, was anxiouſly retracted in three ſhort days.—Let the poſſeſſors of fictitious and litigated rights, therefore, recollect that their exiſtence depends upon a ſort of mediocrity in liberty; that the profit of many of them ariſes from wearing the *maſk* of the people; and that the reſt will be nothing, as ſoon as the crown (whether worn by a native or foreigner) is made every thing. Walking, as they do, upon a narrow plank, let them beware, leſt by ſhunning too much the popular danger on one ſide, they fall into the gulph of deſpotiſm on the other; a

gulph, whoſe waters will ſoon change into blood; and if a few things of ſtraw float upon its ſurface, *apparent rari nantes in gurgite vaſto*, like the ruins in Virgil's ſhipwreck.

If the hazard of arbitrary power therefore in any country, is great, from the internal power of the ſovereign, when unaſſiſted from without; the danger redoubles, and ſtill more the *evils reſulting from it*, when princes come into fellowſhip with one another, and render the *hydra with many heads* no longer the monſter of fable.—*Union between nation and nation*, is proved neither to be eaſy nor acceptable; but union *between princes* is not only eaſy, but faſcinating; for it ſecures their power at home, and facilitates foreign acquiſitions by a much more expeditious mode, than conqueſt; and now that princes have learned this fatal ſecret, it is more than ever neceſſary to be watchful, as well for our *privileges*, as for our *liberties*; and to take care, in England particularly, that we periſh by *neither* end of the conſtitution, the court or the mob.

4. But a ſpecific conſequence is likely to ariſe from the concert of princes againſt France, and from the combination of the triumvirs againſt the world, which I here think it important to detail, at conſiderable length.

The inſular ſituation and the ſtrength of Great-Britain have ſo much withdrawn our jealouſy from any except the maritime powers, that the firſt and ſecond partitions of Poland have been rather reprobated among us in a *moral*, than apprehended in a *political* view. But if we are too ſelf-confident to fear the triumvirs at home, I think I ſhall at leaſt ſucceed in creating a jealouſy

jealouſy reſpecting one of them abroad, by diſplaying the dangers with which Ruſſia threatens our *Eaſt-Indies*; chiefly by means of her Poliſh acquiſitions, the diſcords of France, and the imprudence of Britain.

If the wars againſt the Turks have not put Ruſſia into the poſſeſſion of large tracts of country, they have at leaſt given her important poſts and a neceſſary experience, and broken the ſpirit of the Turkiſh forces as much as they have animated that of her own. But the territories which were omitted to be retained by her out of her conqueſts in the field over an *infidel* power, have been more than made up to her by her frauds in the cabinet againſt a chriſtian power; *Poland being made to pay the whole of the forfeit for Turkey.* The Ruſſians having formed their poſts and marine eſtabliſhments in the quarter of the Black and Caſpian Seas, it only remained to add proviſions and ſtores, and to ſecure rivers by which to convey ſuch from the countries producing them.—This had been effected by means of the two ſucceſſive partitions of Poland, which have given to her the entire corn countries of the Ukraine, and whole provinces of foreſt, together with the courſe of all the rivers Eaſt of the Danube. The obſtacles to the Ruſſian arms from a barren frontier in Aſia, and from a difficult country in Europe, have now wholly vaniſhed; and Ruſſia is brought cloſe to Conſtantinople without one intervening fortreſs to oppoſe her. This celebrated city, which is chiefly ſtrong to a maritime invader, is no longer ſo to an enemy diſembarking near it, to attack it by land.—But what is ſtill more important than this, is the conſideration, that the Turks are not only an exhauſted, ſelf-diſſolving power; but are in fact, ſcarcely to be called a *nation*, but are rather to be held as the remnant of the *conquerors over various*

nations; being very few in number, compared with the extent of their empire. If the Ruſſians therefore once obtain the *central poſt* or *ſource*, from which the population and power of the Turks have chiefly flowed, little effort will be requiſite for completing the conqueſt of Aſia Minor; aided, as the Ruſſians will be, by the Greek Chriſtians who ſwarm throughout the Turkiſh dominions, and by the dejection into which defeat, certain traditions, and the want of European allies will drive the Turks. And while all hiſtory on the one hand, proves the eaſe with which Aſia Minor may be over-run, when *attacked* with ſuperior vigor; the hiſtory of the Cruſades has demonſtrated, on the other, that the whole of Europe will in vain exert itſelf for *ages together*, to ſubdue it when *defended* with a like vigor. This then opens the road of Ruſſia to India by the *Perſian gulph*.—The facility with which a rabble of Mamalucks may be expelled from Egypt, by a regular fleet and army, or may be bribed with the pillage of Turkey to ſurrender it, leaves no doubt about the practicability of her paſſage to India by the *Red Sea;* for whatever was the fact on this ſubject reſpecting the ancients, the talents of modern engineers may in a ſingle year, float a Ruſſian ſquadron with tranſports, acroſs the Iſthmus of Suez to the Indian Ocean. In the hands of Ruſſia alſo, the Black and Caſpian Seas, and the ſouthern courſe of the Indian rivers, will be important articles, in the ſhape of water-communications.—But water out of the queſtion, India is open to Ruſſia by *land*. Aſia always has been the ſeat of wide and rapid conqueſts, in which the Tartar and Perſian cavalry have always formed principal ingredients; and with reſpect to India in particular, Catharine will ſeek not to be inferior to Genghis Khan, to Tamerlane, or

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to Kouli Khan; (to ſay nothing of other mighty conquerors in other parts of Aſia, both ancient and modern.) To be herſelf ſingly, then, the Semiramis of the North and of the South, of the Eaſt and of the Weſt; to render Aſia more of a family poſſeſſion, than America has been to Spain, while ſhe deceives and mocks all the potentates of the earth; this is her proud ambition.

Let me here pauſe and aſk, what have we to oppoſe to this *reaſoning*; and if the reaſoning be good, what have we to oppoſe to the *progreſs of Ruſſia?* I believe but little: but that little will ſeem far leſs, when we conſider what follows.—Ruſſia already abounds in men; and her conqueſts will give her more, provided ſhe has objects of plunder to preſent to them. The North which is full of faſtneſſes, and is hardy and poor, will fight againſt the South which is rich and open as to country, and feeble and timid as to inhabitants. Our chief fortreſſes in India lie towards the maritime frontiers; and inland, where perhaps the moſt danger lies, we poſſeſs little beſides ſtations for petty corps of troops to protect our tax-gatherers. To keep in order twenty millions of people we have an army of natives, and leſs (I ſpeak at hazard) than fifty thouſand Europeans of every age, ſex, and profeſſion, including ſoldiery. Thus circumſtanced, we ſeek by actively favoring the preſent combination of European powers againſt France, and in behalf of the triumvirs, to be inſtrumental in introducing a power into the neighbourhood of India, which is in the train of commanding the means of attacking India by land and by ſea; which can waſte fifty thouſand of its forces annually, for a number of years ſucceſſively, with eaſe; and can always be a *campaign in advance* upon us in India, becauſe diſtance

will conceal her preparations, and ſhe can always begin to operate when our ſeaſon for paſſing the Cape of Good-Hope terminates. If we are always to remain armed in India againſt this power, we ſhall waſte one of our boaſted reſources for domeſtic uſes, namely, the revenue acquired out of India, back again upon India, and ſend much of our own revenue into India to accompany it. If war at four thouſand miles diſtance in America, was ruinous, muſt it not be ſtill more ruinous, when removed to the diſtance of ten thouſand miles?

Let us then beware of exalting Ruſſia and Auſtria, and depreſſing France. The two former powers ſeem likely to be omnipotent to the Eaſtward, whenever they act with united force; and if Ruſſia ſhould grow too large to be wielded as a ſingle empire, its operations will be little impeded by being divided among the iſſue of the preſent empreſs, upon a ſyſtem of confederacy.—As to France, her iſlands will give us only *one* million of people, and will render every one jealous of our navy, and ſend every nation to the free parts of India for ſugar. Let us then, looking to *twenty* millions of ſubjects in India, leave to France her iſlands, as the nurſery of a certain proportion of navy; let us alſo leave her old poſſeſſions in the Indian ſeas to her, to ſecure her intereſted attention to that quarter, where the Ruſſians may ſo ſoon threaten every thing; for nothing can be more important to us, in ſuch a predicament, than to have the French for our co-operators, on account of their proximity to the Levant, as well as the power of their land forces.—If theſe ſchemes be ſaid to be novel, let us anſwer in one word, ſo is our own ſituation; and it would be wonderful indeed, if old ſyſtems ſhould anſwer for new poſitions.—But how it can be wiſe upon *any* ſyſtem, to throw France into the vortex of

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the triumvirate, and to prevent her having an *independent conſtitution, uninfluenced by dangerous family connections*, poſſeſſed as ſhe is of ſuch powers for ſerving, and ſuch means for injuring us; is beyond my little talent to unravel. Do not our hiſtory and our national proſperity each prove, that ſince the time of William the Conqueror, France has never been able once to hazard our exiſtence; but like a teazing fly has only produced in ſome caſes a ſalutary movement and exertion, or like a *remora* in others has operated as an uſeful check to the vivacity of ambition.—But in any event, agreeing as I have formerly done, with much of what miniſters had in view at the time of the Ruſſian armament, I cannot but wonder at *their preſent* meaſures. If they cannot indeed ſucceſsfully *obſtruct* the triumvirs, yet at leaſt, I can ſee no reaſon for their poſitively aiding them; and if Oczakow was important as a key, ſurely the new tracts which Ruſſia has obtained from Poland, ſerve as a lever to turn and to render uſeful that key; and if Oczakow and Ruſſia which are diſtant, were to be deemed important, ſo muſt Poland and the *concert of princes* be, which touch ſtill nearer upon us; unleſs miniſtry conſider the *balance of power*, as mechanics would do, and ſuppoſe that weights are to have effect, in proportion as they ſtand remote from the centre.

5. Promiſes in public affairs, ſeldom form a good political ſecurity, it being thought a mark of ingenuity by politicians, to be able to deceive; ſtratagems to betray mankind being nearly as common in the cloſet, as in war, and, held almoſt as lawful.—Crimes alſo ſeem as little ſcrupled, as falſehoods.—Having formerly diſcuſſed the conduct of Pruſſia with this view, let us

look, for our preſent confirmation, at what has paſſed on the part of *Ruſſia* in the Crimea, in Turkey, and in Poland.

By the peace of Kainardgi, in 1774, Ruſſia made the *Crimea* "independent" of Turkey; and then plotted againſt this independence, having debauched its Khan Sahim Gheray, whom ſhe penſioned for a ſhort time in Ruſſia, then abandoned to the eleemoſynary favours of the Poles, and at laſt unfeelingly ſaw return to Turkey, ultimately to meet the fate of his apoſtacy, namely, poiſon, or the bow-ſtring. The Crimea, thus ſo generouſly made *independent*, was ſoon by the forced ceſſion of the Turks, converted into a Ruſſian poſſeſſion; and its native inhabitants were nearly all maſſacred or expelled by their good brothers the Ruſſians, in order to furniſh a clear field, a ſort of *tabula raſa*, for adventurers to ſettle there under Ruſſian auſpices.

Various other connections or dominions of *Turkey*, were equally the ſubject of the machinations of Ruſſia; whoſe mandates went even to the change of governors, and to other glaring meaſures of "*internal policy*." Yet in ſpite of all this, in the war-manifeſto of 1787, the Empreſs ſays, "*our uninterrupted love of the peace and* "*quiet, which conſtitute the happineſs of the human race*, "is apparent; as is our *condeſcenſion* alſo, in the means "which we have employed without ſucceſs, for main-"taining a good underſtanding with the Porte."

Poland alſo, in its turn, has been bleſſed, like the Crimea, with Ruſſian protection; and with ſimilar conſequences; for it was robbed of a large portion of its dominions in 1772, under the comforting aſſurance, that at leaſt its reſidue ſhould be "independent," under the triple guarantee of the partnerſhip which had plundered it. Poland, in fact, remained without undergoing

going any farther partition, for the term of twenty years, of which jealouſy was the chief reaſon; but it was governed in the interim, by Ruſſia, like a dependent fief.

The ſame revolution which had *withdrawn* France from foreign concerns, having by a ſingular reverſe, cauſed a *jealouſy of her in foreign countries*, Ruſſia ſaw in this ſituation a double reaſoning for renewing her intrigues, becauſe they had thus a double opportunity for ſucceſs. To alter the eſtabliſhed courſe of a government, to force nobles to retreat from the ſeat of public affairs, to violate the perſon (to uſe her own phraſe) of "The Lord's anointed;" theſe were crimes in the French, which ſhe ſo loudly reprobated, and with ſuch pious zeal, that ſome of the very Princes who were apprized of certain of her *own* proceedings, believed in her ſincerity.—With a view to render the farce ſtill more colourable, ſhe diſpatched a Miniſter to Coblentz, gave money to the Emigrants, careſſed the French Princes and ariſtocracy, affected to perſecute other Frenchmen, and circulated univerſal rumours of her intention of embarking in the French cruſade. In the mean time, without contributing a ſingle ſoldier or ſailor to this cruſade, ſhe inundated Poland with her troops, and (though defended by an army thrice as numerous as that, which uſually defends our own iſland,) Poland in a few weeks was obliged to ſurrender at diſcretion; eſpecially as Pruſſia (oh! pudor,) Pruſſia, her Mentor in her new government and her ally in her new career, gave intimations, that ſhe was in the Ruſſian ſecret, and that ſome fatal ſentence had been jointly and irrevocably pronounced. Ruſſia and Pruſſia, two of the three co-guarantees of Poland, at length explained their intentions; which were, that Poland ſhould again be

thrown into the melting pot, and again furniſh each of them with a bribe for their tender mercy, in not taking the whole of it.—The will of Auſtria is ſtill kept back in awful ſilence.

But Ruſſia does not pauſe here. Her ambition is amphibious; ſhe muſt be great by land and by ſea, and ſhine both as an European and an Aſiatic power. Truſting, therefore, that ſhe has now contributed to throw Europe into a long ſcene of confuſion, ſhe is preparing a *new* war againſt Turkey; and, as the beſt prelude to it, ſhe continues her courteous aſſurances of her deſire of a good underſtanding, and of her love for the peace and happineſs of the human race. In the mean time, every appearance of armament on her ſide ſtands attributed to the ſtate of Europe and of France; though as her only wiſh is to *prevent a general peace*, it is her ſecret aim, that while ſhe makes every ſemblance of favouring the cruſaders, the French may be able to oppoſe a firm reſiſtance to them.

In ſhort the conduct of Ruſſia is in every reſpect ſo flagrant, that I cannot quit it without ſome farther comments and hints, which I think inſtructive at this juncture.—Firſt then, when the Ruſſians entered Poland, in May 1792, the *commencing* words, the *Evohe, Evohe*, of her manifeſto, were "*Independence and Liberty;*" "the unſullied preſervation of which precious attributes "of the political exiſtence of Poland," together with "the integrity of the rights and prerogatives of the il-"luſtrious Poliſh nation" were proclaimed as her conſtant objects, in which her "formal engagements" alſo concurred. So much for profeſſions, of which the above is a literal tranſcript.—Next, Ruſſia has lately ſignified to the Poles, that all her interference in Poliſh concerns, has been founded on the "*reciprocal intereſts*" of the

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two countries, as neighbours; and that thirty years have proved this neighbourhood, to be a burthen (on account of her immenſe expences), without having prevented the diſorders of the republic. We have thus a full confeſſion of the fraternizing principles, during *thirty* years, of an old government, which like a good-natured lawyer, has thruſt itſelf unaſked, into the concerns of others. But did Ruſſia expect, that any *one* government ſhould do juſtice in fellowſhip, to *two diſtinct* nations? Certainly ſhe did not, for the double reaſon, that the thing is in itſelf impoſſible, and that ſhe never intended to do ſuch juſtice, but only to ſerve her own ambition.—Here then it is important to remark, that the motive in Ruſſia, for all this turbulent conduct, is nothing elſe but *to be talked of*. And here it is that I ſhall digreſs a moment, to notice a particular, in which hiſtorians highly deſerve cenſure. The minor objects of morality are well enough underſtood by hiſtorians, and ſatire is not wanting in courage to chaſtiſe the violations of them. But the larger lines of morality, which belong to government and to nations, are ſcarcely yet ſeized by them. They look out for events, without relation to principles; they ſeek to intereſt us, rather than to inſtruct us; and holding that princes are privileged to commit crimes, their practice is to make them brilliant. Thus princes think it is not neceſſary to ſerve mankind, but only to aſtoniſh them; and that ſucceſs renders every thing innocent, and even laudable. Would to God that ſome man of ſuperior talents would undertake in an enlighted manner, a hiſtory of modern Europe, (a work in every view much wanted) where battles ſhould figure leſs than philanthropy, where men ſhould be praiſed for the good and not for the miſchief they do, and where we ſhould be told not only of what

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is done, but (in an occaſional manner) of what is left undone. It is thus that princes not only from ſtanding in awe of hiſtory, but from being really informed by it, may finally come to deſerve its honeſt praiſes.—But to return to our ſubject; the laſt comment which I ſhall make in this place reſpecting Ruſſian politics, is that it is inexcuſable in us to think, that events ſecretly menaced from that quarter are *not to happen*, becauſe they are in their nature *ſurpriſing*; though at the ſame time we know, that extraordinary events muſt fall out within *ſome period or other*; and that in no period have they more abounded, than in our own, which has witneſſed the progreſs of Ruſſia and Pruſſia as it were from their cradles, the marked declenſion of Turkey, the ſucceſſive partitions and the revolution of Poland, the important revolution of America, the revolutions of France ſtill ſtranger than all the reſt, the armed neutrality, the concert of princes, the fate of the Catholic religion, the navigations of the admirable Cook, and the magic of modern artiſts and natural philoſophers. Let us then with theſe preparatives, look ſtedfaſtly at Ruſſia, and judging of what ſhe both dares to do, and can do, by what ſhe *has* done, let us count all her promiſes and pretences for nothing, and try her by thoſe data, which can *alone be ſubmitted to our knowledge*, previous to the execution of her projects. If after this criterion ſhall have been employed, what I have ſaid reſpecting the probable aims of Ruſſia againſt Turkey and the Eaſt, including India, ſhall fail to impreſs; then either the reader or myſelf muſt be unfortunate; though my earneſt prayer is, that peace or the independence of France may (to the deep confuſion of Ruſſia) make his opinion of the two appear the better.—For myſelf, when I recollect the mode in

which

which the Empreſs acquired and (to the prejudice of her ſon) ſtill retains her crown, the ſpirit of her reign, her journey to Cherſon to be there inaugurated by anticipation in her *Greek or Eaſtern Empire*, the ridiculous deceptions put upon her in the courſe of that journey, the Greek names given to her children, and the temper of her daughter-in-law, joined to the preceding circumſtances; I ſay, when I recollect theſe things, I cannot doubt of what is and what will continue to be the temper of the Ruſſian *court*, with regard to the Turkiſh dominions, and to Aſia generally; and that it is in the utmoſt degree important for Great-Britain, to watch the whole, with unceaſing attention; that at leaſt by a *negative* conduct, we may ſave ourſelves from miſchief, and return to that happy indifference to continental affairs, in which in general we may ſo ſafely indulge.

6. My next attention will be given to the compariſon of the principles of *monarchies* and *republics*, as to the ſubject of mixing in the affairs of *foreign* countries.

Hiſtory, I believe, will juſtify our laying it down as a rule, that monarchies are always ambitious, and republics only frequently ſo; of which the reaſon is clear; for the monarch (in this ſingle reſpect) *identifying himſelf with his nation*, thinks that all its increaſe goes to his own aggrandiſement; and therefore he is commonly engaged either in intrigues, or in wars, eſpecially as ſtate-ſecrecy generally ſerves to cover his projects. Republics on the other hand, are only belligerent and intermeddling, according to their objects, their ſtructure, and their ſituation.—But farther, if Princes have occaſionally abdicated, or called in partners to their *thrones* (of which they have generally repented);

repented); perhaps, in no inſtance, unleſs in favor of their relations, have they, while living, voluntarily *divided their dominions.* Notwithſtanding, however, the various objections to republics (and they are conſiderable in the preſent ſtate of mankind), yet we muſt allow, that many of the ancient republics permitted *independent* colonies to iſſue from their boſom, as ſwarms iſſue from a mother hive, without purſuing them with any claims of *ſupremacy;* and the American republics, in various inſtances, have even parted with territory and people cloſe adjoining, allowing them to become independent ſtates; and have then admitted theſe offſets to a proportional weight in their general confederacy.—It is my own opinion, that France with our encouragement, would no leſs have delighted in a pacific and domeſtic ſyſtem, than America; but taking her as ſhe ſtands, and without adverting even to the inquiry as to the priority of provocation reſpecting the preſent war, I am ready to compare her conduct with that of Ruſſia, upon the ſubject in queſtion.

For example, France, in the caſe of Savoy, talked of an aptitude in the two nations for union; and, in like manner, the Empreſs, in her manifeſto of 1792, tells the Poles that they were a nation "whoſe identity "of origin and language, and many other circum-"ſtances of relationſhip with the nation ſhe governed, "had rendered *intereſting to her eyes.*"—Again; the French in general have paid for their ſupplies in Belgia, though by the laws of war, Belgia was in part, to be conſidered as a conquered country: but the Ruſſian army, which, without any legitimate pretence, entered Poland, immediately exacted magazines from the inhabitants, then ſold thoſe magazines for their private emolument,

ment, and ended by living at free quarters.—Next, the French within their *own* country have forced a general oath upon every perſon; but the Ruſſians, in a country which is *not their own*, have impoſed an oath, even upon the clergy, (of whom multitudes are not of the Greek communion), and have given only three months to the refractory landed proprietors to ſell their eſtates in a glutted market; to ſay nothing of their overthrow of all *municipal and other law*.—If the French likewiſe, are accuſed of examining travellers, and of erecting a ſyſtem of paſſports and arreſts; ſurely, in caſe of a civil war, either in Ruſſia or in the dominions of any other of the confederates, travellers and reſidents would not find more mercy, than at preſent is found in France: for more is ſcarcely ſhewn in theſe countries even in peace. If this be denied, let us refer to the ſad tenants of Siberia, and to La Fayette to explain the difference.—Finally, to ſhew at leaſt the *parity* of the French and their opponents, even as to the affixing *claſſic names to foreign territories*, we may obſerve the Crimea decorated by Ruſſia with the name of *Taurica Cherſoneſus*; as would the Netherlands have been with that of *Auſtraſia*, had they been exchanged lately for Bavaria. This laſt inſtance of coincidence of conduct, would perhaps be too trivial to mention, were it not in order to obſerve from it, the faſcination of *names*, and the poſſibility of their occaſioning momentous *events*; ſuch for example, as the attempt to renew the *Eaſtern and Weſtern empires of antiquity*, in favour of the *two* princes of Europe who by their ſtrength, their poſition, their poſſible and too probable union, and their excluſive *imperial* titles, with other nominal pretenſions, may beſt ſeem intitled to their poſſeſſion.

7. Let

7. Let me now introduce a farther ſhort theory reſpecting the *ſpontaneous union of the two nations*, upon a *real* ſyſtem of fraternity.—Is there any thing it may be ſaid, to oppoſe this? I anſwer yes; objection may often be neceſſary. In politics, intentions are ſeldom for any length of time, to be truſted; and where a ſtate, already comparatively great, may become greater than is compatible with the ſafety of its neighbours, thoſe neighbours may oppoſe, or at leaſt (by means which are within themſelves) may avoid contributing to, this dangerous concord.—As to Savoy and Belgia, it ſeems that the French proceeded to unwarrantable lengths reſpecting them, upon a ſtill different principle from that which is juſt mentioned; and therefore I ſhall obſerve, that ſuch are the fluctuations of war, that till a *peace* determines the ultimate meaſure of its ſucceſs, it muſt often be highly improper and cruel to make changes in *conquered* dominions, which may ſoon revert to their old ſituation, after being needleſsly thrown into intermediate internal diſorder; and conſequently that poſſeſſions which may be thus tranſitory, ought in general to be held merely as *pledges in depoſit*.—But to ſpeak more at large, I muſt obſerve, that an union can hardly be called voluntary, which is not attended with the true circumſtances of free volition, namely, deliberation and ſelf poſſeſſion, free from foreign force. Indeed, upon *French* principles, the very dominion ſuppoſed to be incorporated, ought at all times to be able to reviſe its own act, and to be able to diſunite itſelf at pleaſure; provided no joint object of a permanent nature, ſhall have occurred in the interim, to prevent it.—But in any event, it is clear, that none of the pretended incorporations of territory and people made by the French, are more cenſurable than the in-

corporations

corporations made by the triumvirate, (whoſe proceedings on this head, it muſt be obſerved, are not yet come to a cloſe) or than thoſe agitated by the *chamber of reunions* under the French *monarch*, Louis XIV; eſpecially as the preſent French at leaſt accompany *their* conduct with this check and this balſam, that they place their new friends in the ſame ſituation with themſelves; without retaining (any more than they do in the caſe of Corſica, as it now ſtands arranged,) any ſuperiority or precedence.—The moſt important remark however, to make upon this ſubject is, that a ſyſtem of union of nation to nation, whether happening ſpontaneouſly or otherwiſe, is more or leſs dangerous, according to the principles, the power, and the poſition of the parties. A potentate, therefore, (like Ruſſia) which is belligerent by profeſſion, which has immenſe ſtrength, and is placed in the midſt of a multitude of objects of prey, is the potentate of all others the leaſt to be indulged with practicing under ſuch a ſyſtem: but ſhould there be an *union* of ſuch potentates among themſelves, (like that of the triumvirs) I will not ſay concluded, but merely poſſible; can there be a doubt whether at leaſt *encouragement* towards them ought not to be withheld in ſuch caſe.—When a martial power can once make conqueſt into a *traffic*, by enabling one conqueſt to pay the expence of itſelf and of a ſucceeding one; and when it can produce another dangerous union, namely that of adding new recruits out of its new conqueſts, to ſwell its old armies; then indeed will it have combined together the moſt dangerous of all ſyſtems, and never will its temple of Janus be ſhut, while there is a world left to be ſubdued.—By theſe rules let France be judged, compared with the triumvirs.

8. The laſt general remark which I ſhall make, regards the power of *habit* upon the mind of man reſpecting wars.—If a petty litigation ſhould occur between two neighbouring corporate towns, every man would ſee the madneſs and atrocity of one of them propoſing to ſtorm, and ſtill more to exterminate, the other; and therefore nothing but cuſtom (introduced chiefly by princes and chieftains) can make the practice ſeem tolerable between nations, where it is ſo much more abſurd; becauſe the fees to the advocate armies which plead the cauſe at iſſue, are more enormous, the opportunity for miſchief more extenſive, and the gains (if any) leſs proportionate, in the caſe of nations than of towns.—But even allowing nations to go to war, ſtill wars may be more humanized than at preſent, without injury to their principal intention; for what in general are the preſent *laws of war*, but only ſuch reliques of the laws of juſtice and civilization, as the barbarous habits of men have permitted to ſubſiſt during war, for the mutual convenience of *the combatants*. But the habits of men are ſo eſtabliſhed on this ſubject, that it was ridiculous in the French, in the outſet of the war, to ſuppoſe (as they ſeemed to do) that theſe habits could be ſuddenly changed.—As our habits however have been greatly revolted by the *novelty* which common warlike proceedings have aſſumed, when managed by the French; it is to be wiſhed, that Europe at leaſt ſhould take advantage of this mode, as it were, of getting at truth by *ſurprize*; ſo as to amend its own too ſimilar proceedings.—But, till that fortunate moment ſhall arrive, it may be proper to attempt to bring ourſelves at leaſt into a ſtate of charity and candour towards the French. And for this purpoſe I ſhall cite a paſſage ſtrongly deſcriptive

of the proceedings of *old eſtabliſhed* governments towards their neighbours. It is extracted from an author, whom I have ſometimes thought became a miſanthrope, from the very circumſtance of his having been capable of *reſpecting* his race, had it been more deſerving of it; for I muſt add by the by, that perhaps the beſt poſſible temper for a public character, is neither that which is too ſanguine as to the virtues of men, nor that which is too irritable as to their vices; but rather that, which has learned to *compaſſionate* them, and to perceive, that if mankind cannot be made perfect, they may at leaſt be improved; which therefore comprehends that heavenly ſentiment, "forgive them, "for they *know not* what they do."—The paſſage I allude to is as follows:

"Sometimes, the quarrel between *two* Princes is to "decide which of them ſhall diſpoſſeſs a *third* of his "dominions, where *neither* of them pretends to any "*right*. Sometimes one Prince quarrels with another, "for fear the *other* ſhould quarrel with *him*. Sometimes "a war is entered upon, becauſe the enemy is too "*ſtrong*; and ſometimes becauſe he is too weak. "Sometimes our neighbours *want* the things which "we have, or *have* the things which we want; and "we both fight, till they take ours or give us theirs*. "It is a very juſtifiable cauſe of war to invade a country "after the people have been waſted by *famine*, de"ſtroyed by *peſtilence*, or embroiled by *factions* among "themſelves. It is juſtifiable to enter into a war "againſt our neareſt ally, when one of his towns lies "*convenient* for us, or a territory of land that would "render our dominions round and compact. If a

* [Theſe are commercial wars.]

" Prince ſends forces into a nation where the people " are poor and ignorant, he may lawfully put half of " them *to death*, and make ſlaves of the reſt, in order " to civilize and reduce them from their *barbarous* way " of living. It is a very *kingly*, honourable, and fre- " quent practice, when one Prince deſires the aſſiſtance " of another, to ſecure him againſt an invaſion, that " the aſſiſtant (when he has driven out the invader,) " ſhould *ſeize on the dominions himſelf*; and kill, im- " priſon, or baniſh the Prince he came to relieve."— But perhaps it will be expected, that I ſhould give a graver authority upon this occaſion, than *Swift's Gulliver*; and therefore without referring to common-place, I ſhall cite a few detached paſſages from Tacitus. " Sua retinere, privatæ domus; de alienis certare, re- " giam *laudem* eſſe."—" Facilior inter malos conſenſus " ad bellum, quam in pace, ad concordiam."—" Penes " quos aurum et opes, precipuæ bellorum cauſæ."— " *Libertas & ſpecioſa nomina* prætexuntur: nec *quiſ-* " *quam* alienum ſervitium et dominationem ſibi con- " cupivit, ut non eadem iſta vocabula uſurparet."

But I ſhall now conclude by a ſhort exhortation in favour of *peace*.—Let us, then, with a view to the *termination* of the war, recollect the alleged *cauſes* of it. Theſe were, firſt our allies; who appear ſafe and contented. Next, our domeſtic levellers; who appear to be themſelves levelled and ſilenced; not by external, but by *internal* means. And laſtly, the ſecurity of Europe; and here as the French, have made their wild experiment in favour of an inſtantaneous transfuſion of opinions from nation to nation, and find the ſucceſs of it impoſſible, and the burthen of the attempt ruinous; they have given, when joined to the antipathy of Europe,

rope, the beſt poſſible pledge to be had, for their future good behaviour.—But ſays Mr. Dundas, (in the *name of the crown*) we are ſeeking after an "effectual barrier" againſt France. If this means the triple line of fortreſſes on the Eaſt of France, Marſhal Saxe's ſagacious opinion in favour of fortreſſes, as *ſeparated from towns*, may convince us, that it would be much wiſer and cheaper, to have ſuch fortreſſes erected *de nevo*; than to ſeek the acquiſition by war of thoſe of a *different* deſcription now belonging to the French.—But laſtly, the idea of indemnification intervenes; on which ſubject we have only to obſerve, that whenever a country, like Great-Britain, obtains a prize out of the lottery of war, it pays ten-fold its value; independent of the queſtion, whether it is juſt to ſeek for this ſpecies of remuneration.

But in the mean time, let us go back to the queſtion of the *ſecurity of Europe*: and aſk our conſciences, whether in preſent circumſtances, the ſecurity of Europe and of mankind, of public and of *private* rights, is not more endangered by the triumvirate of Ruſſia, Auſtria, and Pruſſia, or even by the duumvirate of Ruſſia and Auſtria, or even by Ruſſia alone, than it is by France? If this be ſo, then let us ſeriouſly conſider, what is to prevent a peace?—Is it dignity, *wounded* dignity, "which drags its ſlow length along?" Alas! *dignity*, in its true ſenſe, means only the acting in correſpondence to character; though in its corrupt and inflammatory ſenſe, it implies ſtate and irritability, an unaccommodating manner regardleſs of conſequences, and the purſuit of pride without attention to prudence. But there is another word, quite as high ſounding as dignity, and a little more uſeful in politics; I mean *magnanimity*. Magnanimity ſignifies a maſtery of the paſſions; it makes men not merely the equals, but the ſuperiors of their enemies;

it conciliates intereſt with dignity, and kindneſs with pride; it is fonder of ſpontaneous, than of extorted conceſſions, as rendering all parties happy, as well as all parties ſafe; and it is the companion of a great temper and a great underſtanding, as much as pride is that of little ones. Let us, then, deal with *magnaminity* towards the French; and "be to their faults a little blind, and "to their virtues very kind."—But above all let us avoid the raſh opinion, that we can give to the French *the government which we deſire*; for it is not enough to wiſh the preſent men *away*, unleſs we can ſay who are to *follow* them; and in this reſpect, I venture to ſay, that we ſeek ſomething which is not for *us*, but for the *continental* powers alone to decide.—Every thing then leads us to conclude, that France, as far as relates to our *exiſtence*, is a puny enemy; but that the others are tremendous; for whatever *they* ſhall determine in the affairs of Europe, unleſs France ſhall aid us, it is out of *our* power to gainſay.

As to Ruſſia, it is mortifying to think how ſhe deludes us. A woman we are told has already beguiled our race; and a woman, without ſhe is oppoſed, is again about to do the ſame. She throws down among us the apple of diſcord; thinking, that while we are running after it, ſhe ſhall herſelf win the prize.—But let us recover our recollection. The Empreſs has no character for *ſentiment* about her; and has given much cauſe for being ſuſpected both of deception and ambition, eſpecially when ſhe has before her an opportunity of employing both qualities, like the preſent.—As to her people, we are told by a high authority, that we muſt flay a Ruſſian, before he can feel; and they certainly poſſeſs that *improbus labor* in war, which makes them truly formidable; having, as in the caſe of a deſperate

a deſperate fencer, ſomething which is more potent than ſkill. Let us then diſdain her pretended overtures for aſſiſting us; (*nam timeo Danaos et dona ferentes:*) for ſhe will only treat with us, gain time, and end in ſeeking to over-reach us. Rather, then, let us conſider her as meaning to do her worſt, and guard againſt it; and when ſhe ſends ambaſſadors to talk to us about the concerns of France and of Europe, let us act the part of *Neptune*, of whom we pretend to be the favorites.

'Jam cœlum terramque, meo ſine numine, venti,
'Miſcere et tantas audetis tollere moles?
'Quos ego—Sed motus præſtat componere fluctus.
'Maturate fugam, regique hæc dicite veſtro:
'Non illi imperium pelagi, ſævumque tridentem;
'Sed *mihi* ſorte datum. Tenet ille immania ſaxa,
'Veſtras, Eure, domos: illâ ſe jactet in aulâ,
'Æolus, et clauſo ventorum carcere regnet.'
Sic ait: dicto citius, tumida æquora placat,
Collectaſque fugat nubes, ſolemque reducit.

As to wars *ad internecionem*, they are not neceſſary with France, for France cannot harm us: they are far more neceſſary, if they were practicable, with powers of a more noxious nature.—As to France, her fate is perhaps difficult to read. But this we may know, that aſſaulted as ſhe is with a hurricane from within, and from without, during which the wind is veering into every quarter, it is difficult, even ſhould ſhe fall, to ſay which way ſhe ſhall fall; but all that we know is, that there is much danger, that which ever way *the tree falls, ſo ſhall it lie.* And if we think it wiſe to run the hazard of accident; if we chooſe to reſtore the *central* link in the chain of the *family compact*, rein-

forced as it now is by new members and by new motives, be it ſo; but in that caſe, I ſhall be able to diſcover no *national* cauſe for continuing the war, but only ſuch *perſonal* ones, as I ſhall not wiſh, and the favourers of them will not chooſe to name.—Let us, then, inſtantly quit this war for vague public objects, where danger equally attends good and bad ſucceſs, while we have *peace at our command*; remembering, that ſo long as we find a power in France capable of conducting a war, we find a power capable of concluding a peace; and that the only thing meriting our attention upon this occaſion is, in whom reſides the *ſpring of action* as to the war in France; for, as to mutability and inconſiſtency, the charge on theſe heads is equally heavy againſt the confederates, as againſt France.

A CALM OBSERVER.

LETTER XII.

Publiſhed June 7, 1793.

SIR,

MY preſent correſpondence is now at its cloſe, in conſequence of my having diſcuſſed all and more than the objects for which I became pledged at its commencement, except what reſpects the death of the King of France.—As this topic is of conſiderable hiſtoric magnitude, and the impreſſion from it operates to prolong our impolitic war, I ſhall begin my preſent letter with a few reflections on the character and fate of this unhappy prince, and then proceed to other matter.

And

And here I muſt obſerve, that if Louis XVI. while he lived, was wholly neglected by many, who think that hecatombs are neceſſary to expiate his death; it is becauſe the *king* is infinitely more lamented by theſe perſons than the *man*; ſome of them having even wiſhed for his death, that it might increaſe the public enmity againſt *his* opponents, who are conſidered alſo as their *own*. Thus, of all his friends, thoſe of liberty appear the trueſt; ſince from having earneſtly labored to avert his fate, they may be ſuppoſed the moſt ſincerely to regret it.

The attachment of well informed and virtuous men, to Louis XVI. commenced almoſt with his reign. After the example of his father, the Dauphin, he was early ſaid to reſpect *general* liberty; and if his regard for *religious liberty* did not fully diſcover itſelf till the revolution and till his death, it was becauſe it was checked by his clergy and by the bigotry of too many of his nation. His ſucceſſive adoption of St. Germain, Turgot, and Necker, as miniſters, on account of their public characters, may be conſidered as a ſolid pledge for the ſincerity of his own; for it will not be contended, that he learned any virtues from his court; a ſchool in which virtues are ſeldom to be found, particularly thoſe of œconomy and retrenchment. It was indeed his peculiar fate to poſſeſs merits which led him to yield to the *faults* of thoſe who ſtood near his perſon, and that while he was deſpiſed for the want of intriguing talents, he was ruined by thoſe who had them; it being clear, that if he had uniformly purſued his own plain ſentiments and ſenſe, he would have remained ſafe upon his throne, an object of adoration. His ſacrifices to his people, as long as they were ſpontaneous, clearly ſhewed his deſire of being united to them, by acts tending to

their

their mutual happineſs; even at a period, when princes in France were held as the proprietors of their ſubjects, and when *merely not to injure them* was conſidered as meritorious. When ſacrifices afterwards came to be demanded from him, no one could more readily acquieſce in them; not becauſe he had no will, but becauſe he had an honeſt one. Indeed, conceſſion ſeldom ſeemed to coſt any thing to himſelf perſonally, except on account of thoſe about him, for when theſe were ſatisfied, all his difficulties ſeemed to vaniſh.

Selfiſh ſentiments had as little ſhare in his foreign, as in his domeſtic politics; for though he employed ſeveral miniſters of the old ſchool, yet ambition never was found the feature of his reign. If he ſought, by the American war and by other meaſures, to reduce the naval power of England, yet the peace of 1782-3 ſhewed, that he aimed at retaining no conqueſts for himſelf. In ſhort, while his was the firſt court, ſince the time of Henry IV. of France, from which a public wiſh for univerſal peace has been heard; ſo there was no public meaſure which any other court could propoſe for the advancement of mankind, in which he was not forward to concur.

Though the mode of thinking of Louis XVI. was thus a powerful ſecond to good miniſters, and a powerful check to bad ones; yet at ſome moments he wanted the firmneſs neceſſary to reſiſt ſeducing importunity, particularly from a certain quarter; and his conduct accordingly, became mixed, in proportion as his own feelings or thoſe of others bore the aſcendant in it.—This very circumſtance however, in the end, furniſhed a peculiarly ſtrong motive for *protecting his life*; becauſe it prevented his becoming too popular with the nation on one ſide, as well as leſſened the confidence

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of the ariſtocracy and of foreign powers in him on the other. He was the leaſt dangerous therefore of all the claimants for reſtoring the throne, eſpecially while confined at Paris; at the ſame time, that his life obſtructed the pretenſions of others of his family, whoſe characters were more deciſive, and who were out of the power of the convention. Beſides, if the revolution in caſe of his execution, was ſo certainly capable (as was pretended,) of maintaining itſelf againſt the reſentment of the whole of Europe, and againſt the feelings of thoſe of the French, who would conſider him as an innocent victim, and even as the object of ſacrilege; the revolution was capable, in caſe he had been ſpared, of the ſtill eaſier taſk, of reſiſting a part of Europe without, and a leſs irritated temper of the enemies to the revolution within.—Yet this amiable prince, whoſe virtues paved the way to the revolution, and formed at firſt its faireſt hope, fell, *without any immediate public motive whatever*, a martyr, (as I am willing to allow, in a metaphoric ſenſe,) to the madneſs or to the auſterity of ſome, and to the cowardice or the ineffable villany of others.

But feeling as I do deeply, the truth of theſe ſentiments, ſtill I cannot be blind to ſeveral facts, which go to mitigate them. Firſt, againſt the fatal ſentence in queſtion, nearly one half of the convention was oppoſed; and therefore that intire body is by nó means blameable. Next, ſtill leſs did the people partake in this meaſure of violence, for the king's enemies were afraid of appealing to that people. Thirdly, if the trial failed in its obvious forms, yet it muſt be allowed, as in the caſe of Engliſh jurymen, that *perſonal* knowledge was deemed a ſupplementary circumſtance, which enabled the convention to pronounce in it. Laſtly, although

although the king ſincerely accepted the conſtitution, yet ſince he appears to have afterwards more than negatively oppoſed it, it was unfair to hold the ſingle proviſion for his inviolability as valid, when the ſpirit of all the reſt of it was invaded; for this would be to have put him in a ſituation to profit by his own wrong.

Whether violence to royal perſonages is permiſſible, is uſeleſs for me to inquire, when my ſole object is to prove, that the French have not exceeded others, in the very acts for which it is moſt affected to revile them.—To ſay nothing of Ruſſia and other countries, or even of our own in more ancient periods; it was in England that Henry the Eighth repeatedly beheaded or repeatedly repudiated one Queen, that he might marry another; it was in England, that Elizabeth put to death Mary, the Queen of the neighbouring country of Scotland, becauſe ſhe was jealous of her merits; it was here likewiſe, that Charles the Firſt expired upon a ſcaffold; and that James the Second alſo, had his vacant throne *aſſumed and maintained againſt him by his own daughter and nephew;* all which tranſactions were included in the ſhort ſpace of two centuries. And when a motion was made a few years ſince in the Houſe of Commons, to expunge the martyrdom of Charles from its calendar, (where it has ſince been canonized anew,) the reaſon which weighed for retaining it was, that it ſerved as a proper memento both to prince and to people. Beſides, nations like individuals often commit violent acts, of which their repentance is ſincere; though were it otherwiſe, the principles of natural law allow no interference on the part of foreigners to be offered againſt the inclinations of a people.—Whatever reſpect therefore kings may deſerve for the ſake of their people, yet

ſince

ſince in *other* views they are but mere individuals, it is not upon pretences of this ſort, that we are to convert Louis XVI. into a firebrand, and make him "like "another Helen, ſerve to fire another Troy;" eſpecially as he cannot be revived as to his own perſon, and his death has clearly aided the cauſe of royalty.

But here let us drop the curtain over the grave of an unhappy prince, in whoſe fate mankind are ſo unfortunately involved.—And as it ſerves for my concluding topic, let me now for a moment, turn back to *review the general object of ſuch of my letters*, as in a few days will be preſented in a ſmall volume to the public.

When the popular exertions of France lately alarmed the princes of Europe, they ſoon forgot their enmities, which were founded on miſchievous public principles, to form a friendſhip, which was founded upon others ſtill more deleterious; and as fear gave to them the hint, ſo rapacity and ſucceſs have ſince cemented it. Poland and France have experienced the firſt eſſays of their new ſyſtem, and Turkey and Germany are about to be its next objects.—It is this new turn of the paſſions of modern princes, (by which they have exchanged their mutual jealouſies for a general colluſion,) which I have endeavoured to aſcertain and to expoſe; ſhewing that they are no longer engaged in counter-ſtruggles with one another, to end in conſtituting a *balance* of power, but are combined for a general *extenſion* of power; and that while all of them are armed againſt the public, the ſtronger of them will ſwallow up their weaker brethren; ſince ambition, whenever it allies with ambition, has but one object, which is prey, and one enemy which is liberty.

But

But not content with pourtraying this ſyſtem, I have ſpecified its various conſequences.—It is a ſaying in fabulous philoſophy, that *ſerpens non fit draco, niſi ſerpentem devoraverit;* and ambition, which whether it is lowly and creeping, or high-creſted and rampant, is always deadly, is a monſter of the ſame kind; enlarging its form, and growing more and more terrible in its nature, in proportion to the quantity of prey which it devours.—When the Roman power formerly deluged the world, it ſoon deſtroyed every thing which could ſoften or inſtruct it; and after an univerſal waſte of *human* happineſs, the maſters of it found to their coſt that they could no where ſecure any happineſs for themſelves. Ignorant of the truth, that the active and prurient paſſions of man ſoon run into exceſſes, by which they pall and become ſatiated, and that they require checks inſtead of ſtimulants, to produce that modeſt and frugal uſe, under which alone they furniſh our *beſt* and moſt *ſecure* enjoyments; they quickly extinguiſhed every principle, which could moderate and humanize their characters, and which could give the only ſatisfactions of which our limited nature is capable, and the only ſtability to be expected in human affairs.—The ſame fatal career, however, which was run by the emperors of Rome, is begun under the triumvirate of Auſtria, Ruſſia, and Pruſſia; and if it ſucceeds, will by producing a gradual concentration of power in their hands, or of thoſe of the ſtrongeſt of them, introduce throughout the univerſe, the ſame ſad and rapid conſequences, and in a manner equally unſuſpected by the authors of them.—With this view, I have demonſtrated, that the ſyſtem will be as fatal to thoſe who are at the *head* of it, and to their *families*, as to thoſe who will be trampled under its feet.

But

But drawing the diſcuſſion nearer home, I have ſhewn the ſeveral evils likely to ariſe to ourſelves, whether we aſſiſt this union of ſovereigns, under the name of a *concert of princes*, of a *triumvirate*, or of a *confederacy againſt France*; for ſuch are the various ſhapes, in which this active Proteus has appeared in leſs than two years. Accuſtomed to view France as a rival, we forget that thoſe are our *worſt* rivals, who *moſt* endanger us; and that nothing can be a falſer *national* policy for Great-Britain, than to aſſiſt in ſubjugating France, in order thereby to unite it to theſe powers either directly as a conqueſt, or indirectly as an ally; for there is no doubt, that the Queen and her ſon who are of Auſtrian deſcent, and the princes who are Bourbons, will in the capacity either of regents or of ſovereigns, and from ambition or affection, reſpectively ſeek to join France to the potentates now confederated againſt the ſecurity of Europe; while on the other hand, there is as little doubt, that France, if kept in her preſent ſhape, will be as obſtinately oppoſed to that confederacy. A monarchy in France, of ſuch a nature, as ſhall admit the *national* will to preponderate, and prevent the renovation of that *family* compact, of which France was once the corner-ſtone and maſter key, and which is now capable of being ſo much extended; I ſay *ſuch* a monarchy, might give ſatisfaction to ourſelves, as well as happineſs to France. But I have ſhewn, that the eſtabliſhment of ſuch a monarchy is not in our power, ſince all concerns of the continent, muſt depend upon the *continental* powers, who will ſeek either to erect France into a *perſonal* government; or elſe to diſmember it, in order to ſwell their own power, or to incapacitate its future oppoſition to them; and thus leave to ourſelves *ſingly* the care of the balance and independence

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of Europe.—The danger from ſuch a poſition of things, I have ſhewn to our princes, if they are honeſt; to ourſelves, if they are not honeſt; to our allies alſo; and to our foreign poſſeſſions, (eſpecially the Eaſt-Indies, moſt ſeriouſly threatened by Ruſſia, and the more ſo, becauſe we do not ſuſpect it.)—In the catalogue of our hazards, I have not forgotten that which is run by our ariſtocracy; who certainly miſtake their own permanent *perſonal* intereſt, if they think that it can be ſerved by any thing beſides a ſyſtem of *crown influence*, held conſtantly upon the *balance*, in order to give a conſtant importance to their ſervices; or if they ſuppoſe that deſpotiſm will not be far more inimical to their privileges, than a fair conſtitution.—Let me here add, that though the Engliſh nation has confeſſedly ſeldom been wiſe in its foreign politics, yet it has generally been honeſt; and ſo it happens upon the preſent occaſion; for, deceived by its own integrity, it has had nothing in view but the ſafety of its allies and of Europe, and a generous ſympathy with thoſe who have ſuffered from the French; truſting always, that foreign princes had the ſame object, and would equally ſtop at the completion of it. Whether ſucceſs will tarniſh our generoſity, time may diſcover; but if *ambition* is at the bottom of the preſent war, every good man will have ſeen with delight, that it has, as yet, in no ſhape, manifeſted itſelf in the temper of the *nation*.—I wiſh it may be found, that ſuch ambition exiſts no where elſe; and if ſo, we ſhall ſoon terminate a war which muſt be ruinous if adverſe, and ſtill more dangerous if ſucceſsful; leaving the French bounded to their own territory, and occupied with their own diſſenſions.—There is an Italian proverb, which ſays, that "the Italians are wiſe before "they begin a thing, the Germans while they are about "it,

" it, and the French when it is all over." Let us then at leaſt be a little wiſer than the French before "*time is* '*paſt;*" and not act like the fencer deſcribed by Demoſthenes, who never thought of parrying a blow, till the ſtroke had been given*.

To have expoſed all theſe circumſtances in our preſent ſituation, I deem not only a ſervice to my country, but to adminiſtration; for thoſe muſt be blind friends to them, who do not perceive, that it is much better that they ſhould receive ſuggeſtions now, than reproaches hereafter; and that in giving my opinions, I have willingly ſpared every cenſure upon them.

As I have ſpoken freely of princes upon ſeveral occaſions in my letters, I think this the proper place to do both them and myſelf juſtice, by ſhewing in a few words, the inconvenience of a *democratic republic* in England; not merely, as I have formerly intimated, becauſe a mixed government has here been tried, approved, is eſtabliſhed, and cannot be changed without convulſion; nor, becauſe it would be difficult to determine upon the new government to follow; but for other important reaſons. When the poor, in conſequence of being ill-educated, are ignorant and diſſolute, they are eaſily deluded or corrupted; and it is therefore difficult to eſtabliſh a good government in ſuch caſe, upon the baſis of univerſal repreſentation, though a good government is never more needful. It is not, however, becauſe the lower poor *want property*, that they are to be proviſionally ſuſpended from their elective

* This ſimile is the more to our purpoſe, as it was employed by Demoſthenes to guard Athens and Greece againſt that *monopoly of power* in Macedon, which in a few years maſtered Greece, and inſtantly afterwards converted it into an inſtrument under Alexander to ſubdue Aſia.

rights; but becauſe the want of property indicates a *want of information and of independence;* and therefore education muſt always prepare the way for broadening the repreſentation, where it is wiſhed directly to include the lower poor. Bad delegates on the part of the lower poor, would endanger *other* rights, far more important to them, than that of *election;* they would alſo put into hazard the happineſs of *other men,* beſides their conſtituents; and would prevent that gradual improvement in all claſſes, which ought to be a chief object of government. Beſides; demagogues ſeldom uſe the people otherwiſe, than as the *means* of power, conſidering *themſelves* only as the end; and conſequently, while the memory of kings ſubſiſts, they will perpetually endeavour to revive that office in their own perſons, and will have recourſe to deſpotiſm both to acquire and to ſupport it. But, if there is to be a king, ſurely one that is *hereditary* is the beſt; ſince at leaſt it precludes the ſtruggle annexed to diſputed titles. Let us add, that kings from being born in elevated ſituations, are leſs likely than uſurpers to confine their patronage to the narrow limits of this and the other family; becauſe, as their privileges are acknowledged, they are prone to fewer jealouſies; and by balancing the pretenſions of one man againſt thoſe of another, they oftener arrive at an even diſtribution of their favours, than might be expected. Unity, likewiſe, is more natural in a government, where a king preſides, than in a republic compoſed of various intereſts; ſince a king derives ſo much from his government, that he has a real motive for keeping it together; for after all, in corrupt countries, it will be found, that the true ſecret of government lies *in placing power where public and private intereſt moſt combine, and where the whole is attended with the beſt checks;*

until that happy period ſhall arrive, when the adminiſtration of public affairs ſhall offer leſs temptations for doing wrong, and men ſhall have better formed diſpoſitions for doing right, than at preſent.—As to vigor, it certainly belongs to a republic, which both produces ſenſation, and admits of action, in the greater number; and ſecreſy is of little importance where there is ſufficient ſtrength, and where the motives are honeſt: but, although theſe laſt, with other advantages, belong to republics, I muſt remain for my own part, and for the reaſons here given, attached to a mixed monarchy, among a people like the Engliſh; deſiring only ſuch reforms in it, as are likely to poſſeſs the general approbation.

Let the attachment to a mixed form of government however proceed to what extent it may, our meaſures in its favour ought to be confined to ourſelves, and we ought not to propagate *politics* by the ſword, any more than religion.—Deteſtable as are the Jacobin doctrines, of partial being more authoritative than national inſurrections, of controlling the repreſentatives of France by *ſelf-elected* clubs and ſpectators, of ſilencing all opponents by mobs and by murder, of inviting maſſacres under the cloak of the liberty of the preſs, and of ſuffering popular crimes to go unpuniſhed, becauſe the people are to be held ſovereign; I ſay, deteſtable as is the creation of a new order of men, thus *privileged* to do wrong, in nothing is it more deteſtable, than as it enables the enemies of France by ſpending a few thouſand pounds a year, to diſturb and to diſgrace its government, and to poiſon it at its ſource. Too weak to reſiſt the French in front, they hire patriotiſm under every maſk, in order to get behind them, and ſtimulate them into new follies and horrors; of which

they throw the reproach upon the French, and take the profit to themſelves.—My diſlike of factions, in the mean time, ſhall not make me forget, that the chief of the early part of the French revolution was glorious; that the middle part of it only exhibits a revolution *oppoſed;* and the latter part of it a revolution *driven to extremities.* The firſt foundation of the evils in queſtion lay in the French conſtituent aſſembly; who, forgetful of their national proverb, that *le mieux eſt l'ennemi du bien,* deſired a perfect government for imperfect men; and thence proved the truth of another maxim, namely, that *optimi corruptio fit peſſima.* Next, from their weak affected love of lenity, they *puniſhed no one;* which ſoon led the mob to take puniſhments into their own hands, which alſo paſſed unnoticed by them; and this being afterwards followed by the abſurd theoretical doctrine, that nothing is criminal which is *printed,* produced this monſtrous reſult; namely, that the mob of Paris, without the medium of any repreſentation, controls France, at the invitation of libellous demagogues, who in the mean time, are too careful of their own power to ſuffer the mob to be educated. The intrigues of the *enemies* of France have ſince rendered all remedy difficult.—But even in this horrid extremity, the wretched Marat, in my opinion, is quite as reſpectable as a deſpot; for both parties are blood-thirſty, and both conſult only their ambition and intereſt; only that one uſes a mob, and the other an army; one deceives, and the other defies the people; and one plays the part of the upſtart and proceeds *pro re natâ* and according to the exigence and paſſions of the moment, and the other acts *ſecundem artem* and according to the precedent. Though the mob, therefore, which was ſafely a beaſt of of burthen in France, is now ſtung with the gad-fly of licentiouſneſs,

licentiouſneſs, and like the ox which is ſaid to have forded the Palus Mæotis, may treſpaſs the boundaries of political geography, and perhaps in ſo doing, teach us unſuſpected truths; yet it is the clear reſult of experience, that the beſt mode of reſtoring *quiet* in France, is to reſtore them to *circumſtances of quiet**.—Thus, in America, after they had been driven by our perſecutions into an interregnum full of diſtreſſes and exceſſes, it required ſeveral years, and two *ſucceſſive ſets of conſtitutions*, before they attained their preſent ſtate of wholeſome liberty, where though their *fœderal* government, from circumſtances eaſily explained, forms a weak fabric, unleſs cemented by danger; yet their ſeparate ſtates in general exhibit proſperous and reſpectable governments, chiefly from the abſence of war and foreign interference.

But as I muſt here take a leave of the public, which I ſhall endeavour to make final (though by no means binding myſelf to this effect,) I muſt paſs from kings to a more unworthy ſubject, in order to reply to the queſtion of, *Who is the Calm Obſerver?*—And to this I anſwer, in the words of Æſop: *What I have covered with a cloak, I deſign ſhould be hid.* I think the inquiry therefore is at leaſt thoughtleſs, if not ungenerous; ſince I am no candidate for public favours, and deſire nothing to be credited upon my own authority.—But for the ſake of others, who may at any time be thought to be implicated with me, I ſhall ſay who the Calm Obſerver is *not*. He is not, then, a *party*-writer; the whole of my political

* I ſay, that this reſults from experience; for every ſtep which has *yet* been taken to ſtifle the popular party in France, has ended in puſhing the popular party into new extremes and in the overthrow of its opponents.

writings

writings having been confined to the late American and the preſent French war, which are not to be called party-objects, for they have regarded not only our country, but mankind. It is not that I could not write upon party, with more effect perhaps, than upon other ſubjects; but as I have never inclined to theſe things, I preſume I ſhall not now be provoked to enter upon them.—But where then have I obtained my information? I anſwer, from public documents and what occurs to travellers, having ſtudiouſly avoided every party and domeſtic communication, which might either fetter or diſcover me. Of this fact, my letters bear internal confirmation; having originated from an incident which occurred when political men were diſperſed in the country, coinciding alſo with the views of no party whatever, and having been too incorrectly, and in general too rapidly written, to have been the production of any concert.—To ſay the truth, warned by the judgment of various great men, I have always deemed it dangerous in public affairs, to rely *upon anecdotes and ſecret hiſtory*. For example: if the courts of Peterſburgh and Vienna ſhould be ſaid to have become cool to each other in conſequence of the affairs of Poland, I would argue thus:—the fact may be falſe; it may be affected; it may be temporary; it may relate to trifles; or the preſent negotiations, like thoſe of 1772-3, may be fluctuating; but in any event, *great facts ought to receive more credit than little ones, and momentous events ought never to be left open to hazard;* and as long as Auſtria ſuffers Poland to be apportioned, or ſequeſtered, either by Ruſſia or by Pruſſia, and marches freſh troops to ſupport its armies in France and Italy, there is nothing to be depended upon in the reports of a coolneſs between itſelf and Ruſſia.—It is thus that I find a preſervation againſt ſpurious or

unmeaning

unmeaning anecdotes: and to ſupply the want of thoſe of another deſcription, I rely upon a retroſpect of paſt conduct, upon public events, and upon original documents.—Whoever will purſue ſimple rules like theſe, and read hiſtory with a view to its revolutions and its memorable characters, and be perſuaded that the prince is made for the peaſant, inſtead of the peaſant for the prince, and learn at leaſt to pity inſtead of hating mankind (for "pity melts the ſoul to love,") will find it eaſy to be, what perhaps I have only attempted to be,

A CALM OBSERVER.

June 1, 1793.

F I N I S.

APPENDIX*.

LETTER I.

Publiſhed March 1, 1793.

SIR,

WHEN I reaſſume the ſignature, under which I commented laſt year upon the coalition of certain princes againſt the liberties of Europe, I ſhall continue to adhere to that moderation which the ſignature implies; for if warmth is ever to be juſtified, it is only when it is preceded by the cooleſt diſquiſition. This rule meriting adoption by the public, it becomes the public alſo, previous to any cenſure againſt the French, for having been the firſt to *declare* war, to conſider how far we left them the means of avoiding this dreadful option.—I do not claim attention to this diſcuſſion from attachment to *French intereſts*; but from the relation which it will be proved to bear to thoſe of Great-Britain, of juſtice, and of humanity.

An unrepaired aggreſſion is not the only legitimate cauſe of war; nor is it that cauſe, upon which the French are called upon to lay the moſt ſtreſs.——

* The following letters being only auxiliary with reſpect to the object of thoſe which precede, are here placed ſeparately in an Appendix.

It is therefore only incidentally that I remark, that we diſpute the force of one article of aggreſſion urged by the French, which we ourſelves urge as valid againſt *them;* I mean, the infraction of the commercial treaty. The French, at firſt, thought that this infraction only warranted a return to that *reſtricted* ſtate of *commerce*, which ſubſiſted in 1786; but Lord Grenville informed them, that to annul a treaty of commerce was an act ſo heinous, that it would preclude *all negotiation* even for *peace.*—It is the more remarkable that we ſhould cavil at the French for afterwards adopting *our own* harſher interpretation of ſuch an incident, by placing it among the cauſes of their declaration of war; when we ourſelves have been moſt guilty reſpecting this very treaty. If the French made a law reſpecting paſſports, which affected all citizens and all aliens among them, without any diſtinctions; we not only made a law which operated againſt aliens ſingly, and was alſo avowedly aimed only againſt aliens of the French nation; but we further violated the commercial treaty, by forbidding, *in the middle of December laſt*, the export even of *foreign* corn to France, (though we allowed it to be exported to other nations;) our expreſs motive being, that of checking "an *enemy* in the act "of *hoſtile preparations.*"

This leads us to conſider a ſecond * legitimate cauſe of war, namely, a well founded fear that *hoſtilities are intended.* There are in truth, few acts of aggreſſion, which are in themſelves, fit cauſes of war; moſt of them only becoming ſo, inaſmuch as if ſubmitted to,

* Our parliamentary debates had been confined to the diſcuſſion of the firſt cauſe of war.

they

they might encourage aggreſſions ſtill more intolerable. —But there is ſcarcely one particular enumerated in the French declaration of war, which is not at leaſt an indication of our deſign of war, or at leaſt of our careleſſneſs as to peace. For example, the affair of the alien bill, and of foreign corn; our armaments, and eſpecially thoſe by ſea when we had no maritime enemy to threaten us; our bitter and hoſtile language againſt the French nation; our virtual countenance given to the coalition of princes; our withdrawing our own ambaſſador from France and expelling theirs from England; our open countenance at the ſame time of *active* French inſurgents; and our marked preference to the cauſe of their king, not only ſince, but long before his death, (while we conſtantly pretended *neutrality* as to the internal affairs of France;) theſe circumſtances, particularly when viewed conjunctively, were ſtrong ſymptoms of meditated hoſtility.—But the hiſtory of the proceedings towards M. Chauvelin, complete the demonſtration.

Our miniſtry having aſſigned to M. Chauvelin a character which he had *long and openly* renounced, namely of being the repreſentative to Louis XVI. and having refuſed to him the only character which he claimed, namely of being the repreſentative of the French republic; would receive no papers from him but thoſe, in which he aſſumed no deſcription at all; and theſe communications were what they termed *un-official*. It being conceived from ſome of Lord Grenville's expreſſions, that a defect might lie in the want of formal credentials from the republic, theſe credentials were ſoon ſupplied; but only to produce a more decided repulſe.——About this time it was, that the bearer of a diſpatch to M. Chauvelin having

been ſubjected to a rigorous ſearch in England, and at the ſame time our alien bill giving to M. Chauvelin a farther alarm, even for his own perſon and papers, he put the following alternative to Lord Grenville: Either abſolutely refuſe to hear me, or give ſecurity to my correſpondence; and at the ſame time, tell me, whether my perſon is to be protected. To this it was replied, that "eſpecially after what had juſt paſſed in France," (namely the king's condemnation) "M. Chauvelin, "as agent charged with a confidential communication, "*might* certainly have expected the neceſſary meaſures "on our part for the ſafety of his letters and of his "meſſengers; and that as miniſter from the Moſt "Chriſtian King, he *would* have enjoyed all the ex-"emptions, which the law grants to public miniſters, "recogniſed as ſuch; but that as a *private perſon*, he "*cannot* but return to the general maſs of foreigners "reſident in England." In three days afterwards he was told, that his character and functions, ſo long ſuſpended, being entirely terminated by the "*fatal death*" of the king, he had no more any public character here, where his farther reſidence was forbidden.—Eight days were allowed for his departure; and, as if the inſult was not otherwiſe ſtrong enough, the order for it was Gazetted.

Thus *negotiation was rendered impoſſible* to the French; for negotiation cannot be carried on without miniſters, without ſafeguard to correſpondence, and without free communication;—and during a ſtate of armament and of menace, to refuſe negotiation, is clearly to announce hoſtility.—This concluſion is the *more* forcible, as it ſeemed perfectly eaſy for our adminiſtration to have avoided all difficulty of form, by eſtabliſhing in the way of a *ſalvo jure*, that as no immediate recognition of the

republic

republic ſhould be required from us; ſo no momentary acquieſcence in the mode under which the French ſhould think proper to deſcribe themſelves, ſhould finally bind us.—The French therefore, perceiving their ſituation to be thus without an alternative, expreſſed their ſenſe of it, not by ordering any expeditions in ſecret, but—by frankly and publicly *declaring* war.

To this charge adminiſtration reply, that if M. Chauvelin had had any thing further to urge, they were ſtill ready to have liſtened to it.—Did they ſignify this to M. Chauvelin? On the contrary, had they not told him that he was bereft of all public character, and had not even *nominis umbra*, or the ſhadow of a public repreſentative? Was M. Chauvelin then, at the moment of his precipitate departure, or was M. Maret his intended ſubſtitute, abruptly to reſume a negotiation, before they were aſſured, that their principals, (when inſtructed in what had happened,) might not wiſh to vary their terms, if not to break off the treaty?—Did not Lord Auckland, our *own* ambaſſador at the Hague, think it neceſſary to aſk permiſſion to accept Dumourier's overture for a meeting in Holland, before he felt authoriſed (though only in a collateral ſituation) barely to receive propoſitions? And were the direct and primary negotiators of a jealous republic, to ſhow leſs deference to their principals, than Lord Auckland?—Before however M. Maret could obtain freſh inſtructions, M. Maret was diſmiſſed by our miniſtry as ignominiouſly, as had been M. Chauvelin before him.

That Miniſtry had no objection to M. Chauvelin perſonally, appears from their own ſhewing; for they treated with him before his diſmiſſion, and have ſince declared that they had no objection to liſten to him after it.—Thus then, was the negotiation checked at a critical

moment; and when the French ſo little expected it, that they had ſent a new miniſter to London, and had offered to open a ſecond and auxiliary negotiation in Holland, through the commander in chief of their army.—This check was the more to be lamented, as the negotiation, viewing the actual courſe of many former negotiations, had made more than uſual progreſs; for the French had abandoned the queſtion of the Meuſe, had transferred the queſtion of the Scheldt to the Belgians, had engaged to leave the Belgians finally to themſelves, (though certainly without fixing the time,) and had appeared ready to qualify their decree about fraternity. Theſe were conceſſions, which, when joined with the known intereſt of the French, and with the fact of their having refrained from attacking Holland in November when it lay at their feet, and with their having for two months with great temper and aſſiduity negotiated with a power which refuſed to acknowledge even their *capacity* to treat, promiſed a happy pacification; or in any event, will acquit the French of having been the *immediate* cauſers of the war.—Thoſe who create a juſt *fear* of hoſtilities, and thoſe who refuſe negotiation, are the makers of war; and not thoſe, who ſimply *declare* it. To terminate peace, is to begin war; for FINIS *coronat opus*.

In this diſcuſſion I have no where alluded to the inſulted pride and wounded honour of the French; though to theſe topics, Engliſhmen on *their* ſide would have been deeply ſenſible.—But I have ſuppoſed ourſelves *privileged* to ſhew diſdain and ſuperiority, and to neglect all methods that were in the leaſt conciliatory;—and have only contented myſelf with proving, that when the French decided upon war, they were entitled to ſuppoſe that we ourſelves had been the *firſt* to form that de-

ciſion;

ciſion; and that, being thus driven to the wall, they only reſiſted, becauſe they could hope for no retreat.

If it be now aſked, why theſe ſtatements are made? It is anſwered, that we may know the truth and may proportion our feelings to it; and not purſue the war wildly, or contract dangerous or burthenſome alliances upon account of it, or reject a peace unneceſſarily, or foſter undue prejudices, from a *falſe* perſuaſion, that the French have *wantonly* declared war againſt us.—Whether or not the French furniſhed the firſt or greateſt provocations, or whether it was fitting or not to negotiate with them at all, are queſtions which I ſhall examine hereafter.—But it is only neceſſary to ſhew in *this* place, that adminiſtration having conceded the propriety of treaty with them, the treaty was abruptly terminated *by us* in a manner that took away from the French all hope of an alternative, when they decided upon war, in the manner conſonant with the forms of their preſent government.

A CALM OBSERVER.

Feb. 27, 1793.

LETTER II.

Publiſhed, March 13, 1793.

SIR,

THOSE, who admire the proceedings of our Adminiſtration towards the French, are not content with this deſirable privilege, but put every fair examiner to the following dilemma. If the examiner argues with reſerve and timidity, it is ſaid, that no room offers for

criticiſm; and if he argues frankly and forcibly, he is ſtigmatized as the friend and advocate of the French.—For myſelf, I beg to be underſtood to write in behalf of *caution* only, and not of the *French;* ſince even thoſe, who incline only to *one* ſide of the queſtion, ought in prudence and juſtice, to conſider the caſe as it ſtands on *both* ſides. It is not faſt travelling which inſures our being in the right road; for it may only carry us farther from home; ſo that the firſt point always to decide is, whether we are right as to the road.

If it be contended, that a queſtion reſpecting the war is now too *late* for conſideration; we anſwer, that a knowledge of juſtice and common ſenſe never comes too late, provided it only tends to abridge for a moment the period of injuſtice and of error. To continue the war merely becauſe we have *begun* it, is an argument, which not only will operate with the *French* to continue the war equally, and equally obſtinately, on their part; but which goes to juſtify the indefinite prolongation of every war.—A recent war however, may juſt as properly be terminated by peace, as may a war of long continuance; for no one, for example, has cenſured either Frederic of Pruſſia, or the Emperor Joſeph, for diſcovering during their idle rupture about Bavaria, that it was mutually wiſe to make a ſpeedy peace before they had fought a ſingle battle.

To the public, peace is always a bleſſing, and inquiry always a duty; and if this be true, it is incumbent upon the public not to take blindly for granted, either that the French have been inexcuſable or incorrigible in the preſent diſpute; or that our Miniſters on their ſide are wholly free from blame.—In the firſt place, if we ſhould aſſent to the fact in general, yet ſtill much queſtion would remain both as to the *degree*

and as to the *cauſe* of the criminality of the French. In the next place, as Miniſtry ſuffer no check in their operations in conſequence of inquiry, (for the votes of Parliament give them men and money, at pleaſure,) let us beware, leſt a momentary *unanimity in applauding a war with France*, ſhould end in introducing a permanent ſcene of *diſcord at home*.—The caſe therefore is too important for us to ſurrender ourſelves implicitly reſpecting it to Miniſtry; becauſe, to abandon all inquiry, is to abandon ourſelves ſolely to the *fate of events*, to which none but men deſtitute of ſenſe will ever ſubmit themſelves. Indeed, if we conſult hiſtory, we ſhall find our wars to have been commonly ſo unjuſt, ſo unprofitable, and ſo ridiculous; that nothing can be more adviſable, than to encourage, as a general principle, the moſt rigorous and inceſſant examination into the object, means, and conſequences of every war.

But why is it that we are ſo adverſe to this inquiry? If it is becauſe we *have* inquired already, then inquiry, it ſeems, is a meaſure which in itſelf is perfectly admiſſible; and if we have not inquired, ſince inquiry may either ſerve to confirm the friends of Miniſtry, if they are right, or induce them to ſtop ſhort if they are wrong, it may in either way be beneficial, and in no way can be detrimental.—I beg therefore to cloſe this preliminary diſcuſſion with the following poſition; namely, that to exclaim againſt inquiry upon this occaſion, is to exclaim againſt a ſearch after candour, juſtice, and prudence; and that if *any* inquiry whatever is proper, the ſame reaſon which makes it proper, makes it proper alſo, that the inquiry ſhould be both *fundamental and impartial*.—As to motives, thoſe of an anonymous writer cannot eaſily be the ſubject of diſcuſſion; but it is open to all to obſerve, that the minority in

Parliament,

Parliament, on this occaſion, have at leaſt the appearance of diſintereſtedneſs in their favour; as they have withſtood the torrent of public opinion, without any other preſent effect, than that of depriving themſelves of popularity.—Let us now proceed upon matters of more general diſcuſſion.

Many of the friends of war tell us, that the war was indiſpenſable, becauſe it was *unwiſe to negotiate* with the French. Upon this occaſion, we muſt take the part of Miniſtry, who have actually negotiated with the French, in defiance of theſe very perſons; and we hope Miniſtry will not diſdain the aſſiſtance.—But we muſt firſt deſire, that a diſtinction may be made between a negotiation for *peace*, and a negotiation for *alliance*; becauſe, in order to demonſtrate that it is not fit to make a peace with France, ſome ingenious ſpeakers have endeavoured to prove, that France is a power which is "*un-alliable*." So different however, are the two propoſitions, of a peace and an alliance with France, that there are ſome who contend, (and as appears moſt wiſely,) that it is the intereſt of England to be at *peace with all* powers, and in *permanent* alliance with *none*.

The beſt mode of conſidering the propriety of negotiating with the French, is to conſider *the nature of the prejudices againſt ſuch a negotiation*, which all ſeem to ſtand upon this common principle; namely, that the French are become ſo horrid a people, that for general ſecurity, they muſt either be converted, weakened, or exterminated;—a principle, which after all, will only become reaſonable, when it ſhall be farther proved, firſt, that war is the *only* inſtrument proper to be employed upon ſuch an occaſion; and next, that it is

practicable

practicable by means of war, to accompliſh the end in view; not only in a permanent and ſubſtantial manner, but upon ſuch eaſy terms, as that the benefit obtained ſhall be equivalent to its expence, its hazards, and its miſchiefs.

The firſt objection which occurs to negotiating with the French, is their *antipathy to the exiſting Governments of Europe*. They have no King; and it is ſaid, they deteſt them all, and will ally with none: in other words (like the Greeks of old) they deem *King* and *Tyrant* to be ſynonimous.—But taking the narrow line in politics, and viewing France as our rival, is it not an advantage to us, that ſhe ſhould have principles which inſulate her from all Europe, and thus turn every power, which is either monarchical or ariſtocratical, againſt her; and which conſequently more than *doubly* favour us, by ſtripping *her* of her allies, without any expence on our ſide, and by giving theſe allies to *us*, without the burthen of a treaty, and at a moment's warning?—Do we lament, that we have thus, all the world before us where to chooſe; and do we deſire, by reſtoring France to ſocial principles, again to reſtore her to that aſcendancy which ſhe obtained through them, in the hands of the Bourbons?—No, let her be churliſh, *acariâtre*, and wanting in all the charities, and indulge in a cynic language; or let her be pacific or ſelf-confident, and aſſume a philoſophic or romantic language; in *either* way, ſhe is harmleſs to us. Perhaps human wiſdom could not deviſe for us a more fortunate temper and ſituation, than that of France; for proud in the perſuaſion and ſentiment of her forces, ſhe thinks that ſhe is ſufficient to herſelf; and that when ſhe arrives at peace, ſhe will need neither ally, fleet, nor army; but truſting

truſting to her militia, may wrap herſelf in her mantle, and careleſs of the world, purſue her theories at home. —This is not conjecture, but fact; for ſhe has lately notoriouſly diſdained a connection with Spain, and as is confidently ſaid, with Pruſſia alſo; nor, as will be proved quickly, is the example of ſuch a conduct, *ſingle in the world*, even at the preſent moment.

There is a ſecond objection urged againſt being at peace with the French, which is its *ſyſtem of fraternization* with foreign people.—As I ſhall in a future letter enlarge upon this objection, I ſhall only remark here, that the ſyſtem of fraternization is of very recent date in France, having been provoked by the *Concert of Princes*, which it was intended to oppoſe and to retaliate;—and if in its effects it proves a ſyſtem of aggrandizement, ſuch a ſyſtem ſurely is not peculiar to France. It is upon principles ſtill more queſtionable, namely without reference to conſent, without equality in the connection, and without the grant of a repreſentative form of government, that *other* ſtates aggrandize themſelves, without ſcruple and without remorſe; of which our own ſucceſſive acquiſitions in the Eaſt, and the diſmemberments of Poland, are ample evidence.—And is it no advantage, ſuppoſing conqueſt to be virtually the French ſyſtem, that at leaſt it cannot with France be made a clandeſtine ſyſtem, owing to the publicity of the French proceedings? With them, it is only the arrow that flieth by day; while the ſame ſyſtem in courts is the peſtilence that walketh by night; for France, even though ſhe acts alone, thinks in every caſe *aloud;* while courts on the other hand contrive their miſchief and procure their abettors in it, under the veil of ſecreſy and with all the ſtillneſs of death.—Nor is *the municipal law* of conquered nations at all more reſpected

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by the triple alliance, for inſtance, in Poland, than it has been by the French in Belgia; and as to *corporate property*, not excepting that of the church, the Emperor Joſeph and our own Henry the VIIIth, have as little held it ſacred, as the French.

Yes; but the French are too *faithleſs* and too *unſtable* for negotiation.—Without defending France, let us compare her in this reſpect with thoſe ſtates, by whoſe aid we propoſe to correct her vices.—As to *Pruſſia* (whoſe very growth into monarchy, was the reſult of intrigue and of violence,) her celebrated Frederic in his youth, publicly criticiſed Machiavel, in order to veil his paſſion for Sileſia; and afterwards in his riper years, juſtified upon ſyſtem, the breach of treaties the moſt ſolemn; while his ſucceſſor, in ſeven ſhort years, has in turn firſt courted, and immediately afterwards deceived, five ſeveral ſtates, namely, Turkey, Brabant, Saxony, Poland and Auſtria.—Next comes *Holland*, a ſtate at all times ſelfiſh, but which was ſuppoſed during the American war to merit attack on our part, in return for poſitive hoſtilities on hers, in defiance of bonds of alliance; and thrice ſince that time, have her diviſions put the Stadtholder, who is our ſole dependance, into danger, and rendered her connection with France highly probable.—As to *Auſtria*, immediately after ſhe had been reſtored to her ancient pride by the help of England, ſhe humbled herſelf again at the feet of the ſtill prouder miſtreſs of Louis XV. in order to obtain an alliance with France; and ſhe has, ſubſequently to that period, attempted various infringements of the Germanic conſtitution; as well as ſought to open the navigation of the Scheldt, contrary to the very treaty now pretended to be ſupported; beſides perſecuting the clergy, ſo as to bring the Pope to Vienna, on the vain taſk of ſuppli-

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cating lenity to them; and beſides alſo repeatedly breaking its engagements with the Belgians, ſo as to drive them into madneſs and revolt.—Since *Sardinia* forms part of this group of allies, we muſt not forget, that in the time of Louis XIV. one of its Princes *twice* within a few years, ſeparated his troops from his allies in the *open field*, in order from an ally to become an enemy; and, that if hiſtory ever exhibited an inſtance of princely cunning being hereditary, it is in the Savoy family; which has latterly only crept into the ſhape of royalty, by the very wiles and manœuvres, which have at the ſame time ſo largely increaſed its dominions.——As to *Spain*, our intended new ally, we have ſeen how little her alliance has profited France; for though France has always fairly and with real effect adopted the Spaniſh quarrels (even ſince the Revolution,) yet Spain has commonly lingered on her ſide with reſpect to France, till her junction has become nearly uſeleſs, and then has gone to war, led to it like a tottering child; and Spain at preſent exhibits the farther evils, of miniſters ſtill more fluctuating than thoſe of France, of a Court governed by folly and by low adultery, and of a nation diſpoſed to revolt from domeſtic cauſes that are wholly diſtinct from French principles.——I ſhall not touch farther on this ſubject, though the dead Guſtavus, the living Catharine, and the kingdom of Portugal, each afford as ample themes as *any* of the preceding.

But in order to do complete juſtice to the compariſon between the French and their opponents under this head, it is neceſſary to give a key to ſome of the verſality objected to France.—After a ſeries of miniſters in France had been created and diſmiſſed, *previous* to the acquiſition of power by the firſt aſſembly; the flight

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of the King in June 1791 occaſioned a general change of ſentiment in the French;—but at a moment when that aſſembly was itſelf adopting moderation and re-eſtabliſhing order, the court favoured two decrees calculated (and I fear deſigned) to produce *a general confuſion;* the one having for its object to diſſolve that aſſembly, and the other to prevent the re-election of any of its deputies into the aſſembly to follow. Thus France was put to ſea again in the midſt of tempeſts, without any chart to guide it; unaccommodating men took the lead in the new aſſembly; the Emperor threatened, and produced a formidable war without; the King reſiſted the temper of the times, and occaſioned his own dethronement within; and republicaniſm, which for ſome time, had been only ſmothered, became the eſtabliſhed government. Thus far the French, urged by oppoſition and by events, uſed progreſſive meaſures to eſtabliſh their original principles; their means becoming more deciſive in proportion to reſiſtance and to danger; (for few will aſſert, that their firſt conſtitution was either ſo recognized abroad, or ſo ſupported by the higher orders at home, as ever to have had even a common chance of ſucceeding.)—Thus far then, *events led the way*, and *men followed* them or not, according to their ſagacity or their ſentiments. Thus then, in proportion to external preſſure, the vaſt maſs of the French revolution has deſcended from time to time, in order to ſeek the baſe that would beſt bear its increaſing weight; and in its way, it has paſſed in ſucceſſion, all thoſe actors in it, who have reſolved to remain at their original ſtations. If it ſhall hereafter be ſtill more preſſed by incumbent forces, it will plunge yet deeper and deeper, till attempts be made to bottom it upon Agrarian laws, which of all others are calculated

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to animate the *moſt* hearts and arm the *moſt* hands in its defence; for, as the preſent French leaders are not only *theoriſts without property*, but alſo, (to uſe the words of the poet) "ſtrong with the fear of death," they will abſtain from no popular meaſure whatever, appearing neceſſary to their ſafety and ſucceſs.——This then, without mixing in detail, is (with only one principal exception commencing in September laſt,) the ſecret of what is called, "the want of faith and of "conſiſtency" in the French; of which the moving principle, it will be perceived, lies in the hands of *thoſe*, who add to the burthens and difficulties of France, and who thus blame what they in effect create.——To *England*, France had long looked with fondneſs, as imagining her to poſſeſs a bold and kindred love of liberty; and they ſtill point their eager affections to America and Poland, as ſufferers in their own cauſe; ſo that impartial men will probably allow, that the French would at leaſt be true to treaties concluded with the *two laſt named* countries. But thoſe, who expect that France ſhould be true alſo to *all* the old French treaties with other powers (though ſhe has in fact been true to moſt of them,) as being the *only* pledge by which to judge of her ſincerity as to the terms of a *general peace* at preſent; I ſay, ſuch perſons rather exact unfairly and with rigor; ſince great revolutions, whether reſpecting the perſon of a prince, or the conſtitution of a government, have always if neceſſary, been followed by a ſubverſion of the ſeveral foreign treaties which preceded them.

There are next certain *dogmas or tenets*, current among a part of the French, which while they are current, are by ſome thought juſtifiable obſtacles to negotiating even with the whole nation; which, as we are now

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in actual war, ſeems in effect to be ſaying, that we are to continue the war as long as they prevail. Theſe dogmas are of the following deſcription; viz. "The "right, and even duty, of inſurrection, in certain caſes; "the natural equality of man; the ſovereignty of the "people in a convential, if not in a legiſlative ſenſe; "the amenability of kings to trial; the aſſaſſination of "ſucceſsful tyrants, &c."—Many of theſe doctrines are to be found in Engliſh writers, who have been favoured by the Hanoverian family now upon our own throne; and ſome of the moſt equivocal of them, are read in the ancient claſſics, with frequent enthuſiaſm. But I muſt farther obſerve that theſe poſitions have moſtly a *domeſtic application*—to France; and that, in any event, they are only to be conſidered under the ſhape of *ſeditious publications;* the authors of which write in ſociety, inſtead of writing individually; and the ſpread of which, being *already effected in France*, it only remains for us, if propagated among ourſelves, to oppoſe them by our domeſtic laws and domeſtic efforts.—The French indeed, ſeem highly cenſurable for the latitude given to their preſs, even when directly aimed to excite the worſt of overt-acts, and probably derive their chief internal misfortunes from this *theoretical* error; but to wage an interminable war with a nation, becauſe of its looſe libel laws, ſeems a little novel; eſpecially when we farther recollect, that the perſecution of France for this object will be uſeleſs, unleſs we can regulate the preſs of every *other* country beſides upon the globe.

Thus far we have recited only *political* objections to negotiating with the French; but we ſhall now briefly mention ſome *ſentimental* ones, which however form a

ſort of prudery, that ſcarcely merits deep diſcuſſion.—The firſt of theſe impreſſions is owing to the ſuppoſed *atheiſm* of the French *nation*; which might be combated by a peremptory denial of the fact from perſonal knowledge; though I muſt admit, that many *individuals* doubt, and not a few deny, the exiſtence of a God. But I have often aſked, (as I find the reſpectable Mr. Wyvil has done,) why it is, if this ſpecies of argument is valid, that we ſend an embaſſy to China; the Governors of which country, according to Mr. Hume, are the only regular body of *deiſts* in the univerſe; being the diſciples of Confucius, and having no prieſts or religious eſtabliſhment whatever! In ſpite of my reſpect for religion, and for its *capacity* to render the utmoſt ſervices to ſociety, I muſt acknowledge, from this and other examples, that an eſtabliſhment for it is not *indiſpenſable* to good order; becauſe China on the whole, is an orderly, moral, and what is ſtill more remarkable, a pacific empire. China indeed, is the inſtance to which I alluded above, of a nation which was at once *ſecluded and pacific*, owing to the peculiarity of its maxims, and the conſciouſneſs of its ſtrength; inſomuch, that it neglects even the ordinary means proper for its defence to ſuch a point, as, in defiance of its ſtupendous population, to have become the prey even of a handful of Tartars. Perhaps French irreligion is the more inſiſted upon at this moment, as the claims of Kings in the preſent diſpute, are now again pretended to be derived, not from compact and from *human* right, but from right divine: which right, it is clear, would fail before an infidel tribunal!—Another *ſentimental* objection to the condeſcending to treat of peace with France, is taken from the pretended *cruelty of the Freneh;* which how-

ever forms no objection to our treating with the *Barbary Powers*, and even at times, to protecting them, (ſolely from views of commerce or policy;) though theſe piriates are the *known and ſyſtematic* foes to the *peace*, the public and private *property*, the perſonal and national *liberty*, and the true *religion*, of all mankind. Without however controverting or modifying this charge of cruelty againſt the French, yet we muſt at laſt aſſert, that the Duke of Brunſwick and his ſuperiors have fully *counter-balanced* it; ſo as to leave us nothing to diſtinguiſh between them. We may alſo add, that when an oppreſſed people reſume their rights, the ſenſe of paſt injuries, and the fear of the return of them, may well both induce and excuſe conſiderable acts of violence. Thus, the war of the *League* in France, was bitter in all ranks, becauſe affecting all of them; the war of the *Fronde* was bitter in none, becauſe affecting only a few; and the war of *reſiſted liberty*, if it continues, will be better in all of them again.—As to the *death of the king*, which none deplore, and which few have laboured to prevent, more than myſelf; as I reſerve it as the topic of a future letter*, I ſhall only here aſſert, that if kings are made for nations and not nations for kings, it is contrary to all principle to exterminate a *nation* in order to expiate a crime towards a *king, who is* at the ſame time *dead*. Does not our religion teach us to be diffident in judgment, prompt in charity, ſlow in vengeance, and earneſt to reclaim thoſe who are in error? and ſhall we raſhly ſeek to extinguiſh an immenſe nation for an act, in which a few only took the lead, in which a minority only has concurred, and of which three-quarters of the whole nation, either by age or other circumſtances, were incapable of forming

* See p. 216.

any judgment. Gracious heaven; ſhall we deprive twenty-ſix millions of men, *women and children*, of their *natural* exiſtence, becauſe one of their number has periſhed, who was clothed with an artificial *political* exiſtence, given to him for *their* ſakes and not for his own! What man, duly conſcious of his own nothingneſs and ſubordination to the univerſal Creator, can look upwards to that Being from whom his own exiſtence is but a loan, and ſay that he, wretched mortal, has a right, upon the ſtrength of his fallible judgment, to ſeek to exterminate ſo large a portion of the human race, as *one-fourth* of the population of our quarter of the *globe?* Did we in England ſeriouſly labour to *avert* the cataſtrophe we affect to lament? Did not many of us too *certainly* rejoice that it happened, in order that we might be intitled to exerciſe reſentment for it? And is not the precedent of all that took place, borrowed from a fatal trial in our *own* hiſtory; and are we not ourſelves, notwithſtanding, the living proofs how much more eaſy it is for time and for providence to reſtore a nation quietly and without bloodſhed to its ſenſes, than for Coſſacks, Tartars, and all the tribe of military horrors?

In my letter publiſhed on the 1ſt of March, I argued, that the French were impelled to *declare* war by the moral probability that we had ourſelves *predetermined* it, and by the phyſical *impoſſibility of their negotiating*, where neither ſafeguard to correſpondence, nor the reſidence of a negotiator were allowed to them. In my preſent letter, I have combated *negatively* the prejudices againſt ſuch a negotiation; whether of a political or of a moral nature; thoroughly convinced on the latter ſubject, that nothing can be more contradictory, than to employ one moral ſentiment to deſtroy another; and that a liſping

effeminacy

effeminacy is often a cover to the hardeſt of hearts.—In my next letter, I ſhall conſider the various *poſitive* motives ſubſiſting for negotiation, in order to induce us to terminate by it the preſent unhappy war*.

A CALM OBSERVER.

As the reader will not be diſpleaſed to recall to his memory the following paſſage from Mr. Burke, it is here extracted from his *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.*

" THE ſtate of Poland was ſuch, that there could " ſcarcely exiſt two opinions, but that a reformation " of its conſtitution, even at ſome expence of blood, " might be ſeen without much diſapprobation. No con- " fuſion could be feared in ſuch an enterprize; becauſe " the eſtabliſhment to be reformed was itſelf a ſtate of " confuſion. A king without authority; nobles with- " out union or ſubordination; a people without arts, " induſtry, commerce, or liberty; no order within; no " defence without; no effective *publick* force, but a " *foreign* force, which entered a naked country at will, " and diſpoſed of every thing at pleaſure.—Here was a " ſtate of things which ſeemed to invite and might per- " haps juſtify bold enterprize and deſperate experiment. " But in what manner was this chaos brought into " order? The means were as ſtriking to the imagination, " as ſatisfactory to the reaſon and ſoothing to the moral " ſentiments.—In contemplating that change, humanity " has every thing to rejoice and to glory in; nothing to " be aſhamed of, nothing to ſuffer. So far as it has " gone, it probably is the moſt pure and defecated public " good which ever has been conferred on mankind. We " have ſeen anarchy and ſervitude at once removed; a " throne ſtrengthened for the protection of the people, " without trenching on their liberties; all *foreign* cabal

* See p. 119, 135, and 145.

" baniſhed,

" baniſhed, by changing the crown from elective to he-
" reditary; and what was a matter of pleaſing wonder,
" we have ſeen a reigning king, from an heroic love to
" his country, exerting himſelf with all the toil, the dex-
" terity, the management, the intrigue, in favour of a
" family of ſtrangers, with which ambitious men labour
" for the aggrandiſement of their own. *Ten millions of*
" *men* in a way of being freed gradually, and therefore
" ſafely to themſelves and the ſtate, not from civil or
" political chains, which, bad as they are, only fetter the
" mind, but from ſubſtantial perſonal bondage. Inhabi-
" tants of cities, before without privileges, placed in the
" conſideration which belongs to that improved and con-
" necting ſituation of ſocial life. One of the moſt proud,
" numerous, and fierce bodies of nobility and gentry ever
" known in the world, arranged only in the foremoſt
" rank of free and generous citizens. Not one man in-
" curred loſs, or ſuffered degradation. All, from the
" king to the day-labourer, were improved in their con-
" dition. Every thing was kept in its place and order;
" but in that place and order every thing was bettered.
" To add to this happy wonder (this unheard-of con-
" junction of wiſdom and fortune) not one drop of blood
" was ſpilled; no treachery; no outrage; no ſyſtem of
" ſlander more cruel than the ſword; no ſtudied inſults
" on religion, morals, or manners; *no ſpoil; no con-*
" *fiſcation;* no citizen beggared; none impriſoned; *none*
" *exiled:* the whole was effected with a policy, a diſ-
" cretion, an unanimity and ſecrecy, ſuch as have never
" been before known on any occaſion; but ſuch wonder-
" ful conduct was reſerved for this glorious conſpiracy in
" favour of the true and genuine rights and intereſts of
" men. Happy people, if *they* know to proceed as they
" have begun! Happy prince, worthy to begin with
" ſplendor, or to cloſe with glory, a race of patriots and
" kings: and to leave

" A name, which every wind to heav'n would bear,
" Which men to ſpeak, and angels joy to hear.

" To finiſh all—this great good, as in the inſtant it is,
" contains in it the ſeeds of all *further* improvement;

" and

" and may be conſidered as in a regular progreſs, becauſe
" founded on ſimilar principles, towards the ſtable ex-
" cellence of a Britiſh conſtitution.

" Here was a matter for congratulation and for feſtive
" remembrance through ages. Here moraliſts and divines
" might indeed relax in their temperance to exhilarate
" their humanity."

THE END.

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